Daily Report

Latin America

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FBIS-LAT-93-236 *10 December 1993*

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Cuba

Alarcon Denounces U.S. Visa Denials

FL0912141793 Havana Radio Rebelde Network in Spanish 1000 GMT 9 Dec 93

[Text] Ricardo Alarcon, president of the National Assembly of the People's Government, has denounced the fact that the U.S. Interests Section in Havana denies 60 percent of the visas requested by Cuban citizens in order to visit their relatives in the United States. Alarcon explained that dispositions in force in the United States since 1966 grant privileges to Cuban nationals who emigrate to the United States, despite the fact that they constitute only 0.5 percent of the total number of immigrants and 2 percent of the refugees arriving in the United States.

Government Offers To Establish Relations With South Africa

FL0912133393 Havana Radio Progreso Network in Spanish 1200 GMT 9 Dec 93

[Text] On 8 December the Cuban Ministry of Foreign Relations issued a communique on the establishment in South Africa of the Executive Transition Council. The communique says our people and government, with deep revolutionary jubilation, hail the establishment of this council in South Africa.

That important step toward the definitive dismantling of the infamous regime of apartheid is the result of the long and heroic struggle sustained by the South African masses, who have offered up the lives of their best sons to achieve this heroic accomplishment, thereby writing one of the most beautiful pages of African history.

The statement indicates that the Cuban Government conveys its willingness to establish official relations with the transition authorities. At the same time, the note clearly expresses Cuba's fraternal friendship and resolute support for the new South Africa that will result from forming a democratic and united society in which all South Africans participate.

Castro Inaugurates Finlay Vaccine Plant

FL1012005093 Havana Cuba Vision Network in Spanish 0235 GMT 7 Dec 93

[Speech by President Fidel Castro inaugurating the Carlos Finlay Institute vaccine plant during a ceremony held at the Convention Center in Havana on 3 December—recorded]

[Text] Distinguished prominent guests visiting us from the spheres of the world pharmaceutical industry and science, guests, and ladies and gentlemen, comrades: The same thing always happens to me! Perhaps I insist because I am a persevering person. I mean, I insist on not speaking.

I don't know what for! How many times have I asked Maria de los Angeles to make the closing speech? How many times have I argued with the organizers of the ceremonies? But now I realize the only alternative left to me is to either attend or not attend!

And really, what can I say here, where such estimable, capable comrades have spoken? What can I say about Finlay that his biographer, Dr. Lopez Sanchez, has not said? We have the privilege of being able to count on a man such as he, who has gone so deeply into Finlay's life, who knows Finlay's work and his life in such great detail!

He talked about what Finlay's discovery has meant to mankind. One could say that sooner or later somebody would have discovered it. That happens in everything. But who could calculate the number of lives he saved by coming up with that theory when he did, and by making its application possible when the circumstances under which it was possible to do so arose? How many more years might mankind not have taken to discover this vector?

And not just against yellow fever! The same theory served to find the vectors for other diseases, such as malaria. We should not forget that! I could ask you, Lopez Sanchez, if people already knew back then that the mosquito—another mosquito—was the vector for malaria? [response unintelligble] [Castro enters into dialog with Lopez]

It was after Finlay. In what year?

[Lopez] [Words indistinct] already back in 1902.

[Castro] 1902.

[Lopez] (?So), 20 years.

[Castro] Had the influence of the Aedes Aegypti [mosquito] already been discovered?

[Lopez] [Words indistinct] in 1903. [Words indistinct] he had solved the problem of transmission via vector.

[Castro] You see? So, he had solved the problem in theory in 1881?

[Lopez] In theory.

[Castro] Those tests you said they carried out: When did they effect them? In what year?

[Lopez] Well, he says [words indistinct].

[Castro, interrupting] But I mean the first ones, after he applied the [word indistinct].

[Lopez] (?Around) 1881.

[Castro] In 1881, the first test of transmission?

[Lopez] [Passage indistinct]

[Castro] And did not the brave man who allowed himself to be stung by the mosquito get a prize? [laughter]

[Lopez] Well, I don't think that....

[Castro, interrupting] You said here that he survived. All that was very interesting to us all.

[Lopez] [Passage indistinct]

[Castro] But I must say that, among our scientists, I have known many people who gave themselves a vaccine, so as to test it on themselves. Let us say that the Finlay group that worked on the anti-meningitis vaccine used it on themselves. They later tested it on relatives and all that. This was after having reached quite a high level of certainty, of course.

I mean, you can see that anyone back then who lent himself for testing a theory regarding such a dangerous disease, and one for which there was no treatment, has great merit. And as you spoke, I was thinking that, from the moment the theory came into existence, the simple use of a mosquito net on people ill with the disease became an important preventive element. I also was remembering other diseases: dengue fever, for example. One must note that the influence of that theory touches even dengue fever. It was later learned that dengue too was transmitted by the same variety of mosquito. And we, here, had the hemorraghic dengue epidemic, and, well, [words indisinct]. We found ourselves deeply involved in a very serious struggle. And Finlay's theory and thought were present in this struggle.

The battle was against the mosquito, in other words, against the carrier. For this, we used effective therapeutic methods. It was very important to know what needed to be done. We had over 300,000 cases of hemorraghic dengue. The treatment given reduced mortality to about 150 cases. That is a high figure, but I am convinced that under any other circumstance or in many countries of the world an epidemic like this one would have taken thousands of lives. In other words, we can say that the therapeutic method and the treatment given to the sick reduced mortality to a minimum.

The struggle against the carrier was the key to eradicating the sickness. In the final phase of the treatment the patients were hospitalized to avoid contact with the mosquito. If you know the carrier the struggle becomes more practical and feasible. We continued like that until no more cases of hemorrhagic dengue were reported. Since then our struggle has been to keep the carrier at the lowest level possible.

It is very sad to know that Finlay's merits have been questioned. It is not chauvinism on our part, but the authorship of his discovery and his theories have been completely established. I recently read that for many years he had been considered for the Nobel Prize, but due to the opposition of certain interests he was never given that Nobel Prize. Therefore, even in this Finlay was unjustly treated. To this day....[pauses] Just recently, a book was written in Europe challenging Finlay's merits. This was just recently, that is why we must continue struggling.

We believe this with a very deep conviction. We recognize his merits just as many do throughout the world, including Latin America. That is why we have summoned you here and have used the date of his birth to commemorate Latin American Medicine Day. I do not know if all Latin American countries celebrate this date, but I do know that there are some that celebrate Medicine Day on this date. [Castro questions Dr. Lopez Sanchez] Is this date universal? No?

[Lopez] There are doctors that take advantage of the date to celebrate Latin American Medicine Day, but it is not celebrated in all places.

[Castro] It is not celebrated in all places. Is it celebrated in some countries?

[Lopez] In Latin America.

[Castro] In some Latin American countries. What do they celebrate, the day of Latin American Medicine Day or Medicine Day?

[Lopez] They celebrate Medicine Day or Doctors Day.

[Castro] Doctors Day. Was this after Finlay's birth date or is this just a coincidence.

[Lopez] It was after his birth.

[Castro] Finlay is highly recognized in Latin America. Has your book been published over there or have we lacked the means? You should have gotten together with a publicity transnational to bring your book...

[Lopez, interrupting] The book is in the hands of all doctors here in Cuba.

[Castro] Yes, but it is not in the hands of the rest of the doctors.

[Lopez] That does not depend on me.

[Castro] What did it depend on: the publisher, paper?

[Lopez] The publisher.

[Castro] Maybe something else can be done to distribute your book in the rest of the world. It is needed because accusations are still being written. Just today, I was told by Rosa Elena [Rosa Elena Simeon, president of Cuban Academy of Sciences] that you had conducted an excellent conference defending the authorship....[pauses] You said it would be controversial when I said: Use some of those arguments today. Lopez pointed out: We have foreign visitors with us and I do not want to touch on a controversial subject. This is probably as wise as Finlay's discovery.

Another thing I cannot talk about is what the medical developments in Cuba since the triumph the Revolution have represented because Comrade Teja [Public Health Minister Julio Teja] eloquently spoke of this. He gave us some figures that are significant and which could be analyzed. He pointed out that the infant mortality rate

has reached 9.4 for every 1,000 live births. This is something that we could not even imagine in the current circumstances of the special period. We struggled to maintain the level we had reached. We struggled to keep it from increasing, not making the rate go below 10, which was one of our goals under normal conditions.

You must keep in mind that all these programs were designed during normal periods. The list of all these programs which Teja spoke of, he detailed each one of them, is very long. I believe there were more than 50 programs associated with medicine that were developed and implemented in the last 10 or 12 years: from pediatric cardiovascular surgery to prenatal genetics program, many of these vaccination programs, the development of specialties, intensive pediatric therapy, and intensive prenatal care. Why is it called prenatal?

[Lopez] It is perinatal.

[Castro] Oh, perinatal. Because prenatal is before birth, right? Then it is perinatal, which means the time around the birth. This intensive care has saved many lives. These programs as a whole have made the reduction of the infant mortality rate possible. Just look at the results of a job so well done that even under such difficult conditions they can continue advancing and progressing.

The family doctor is also associated with these achievements. That is another one of these programs, of the approximately 50 programs or measures. The family doctor also is a complete program. The development of specialities also is a complete program. We can say that we have been applying many programs in health care matters to be able to obtain these results.

However, when he [Teja] said: 51,000 doctors, I must confess that I also was amazed, as if I had never heard the number of doctors we have. It is something that is frequently mentioned. I frequently talk about it, too, but time has betrayed me. I lost track that in August another-.....[pauses] How many graduated? 4,600. This totals 51,000 doctors. The health accomplishments Teja spoke of have to be seen in relation to the presence of the personnel and their abilities.

This could be better appreciated if we remember that at the beginning of the Revolution there were 6,000 doctors, and that many were unemployed, and that 3,000 left the country. We were left with 3,000 doctors. Now we have almost 17 doctors for every one we were left with. There are thousands in the medical schools. We have medical schools in the provinces. This was another program. Is it a program or a measure, that of having medicine schools in every province? There are several in Havana. This is why we have about 20 or 21 medical schools. Right now, we are using these schools primarily to train nurses. We have had to reduce the number of new students. However, about 2,500 new students register each year. We have been reducing the number. At a certain point, twice that many were registering. So far, we have not had an excess of doctors. The problem with doctors is that no one can make them retire.

A division or army general, or whatever, can be retired but not a doctor. Doctors never retire. This is good of them. Right? You have not retired and that is good. [Castro addresses Lopez] And do not even think about stopping your studies on Finlay, because you would be relinquishing your most sacred duty.

All these efforts have been conducive to creating this situation. When Teja spoke about hospitals and large hospital complexes, he mentioned the Hermanos Ameijeiras Clinical Surgical Hospital. Originally, the Hermanos Ameijeiras Hospital was going to be a bank—I believe a central bank. The facility was completed at the triumph of the Revolution. Later, it underwent a fire. Afterwards, it sat there for years waiting to be rebuilt into a bank or perhaps waiting for money to become a bank. The fact is that we changed the project and turned the building, which already had several stories, into a hospital. Of course, we had to change many things. I thought about it and asked myself: Did we do this right? What should be built first, a bank or a hospital?

The fact is that we built the hospital and have yet to build the bank. Banks are, of course, needed. Is it not so Benavides [not further identified]? Banks are needed because money is needed for all these projects. What we have truly done is to....[pauses] We have plenty of money, but in Cuban pesos. We have very little hard currency. However, we have managed to get along with the little we have to maintain these projects, like the special period, for example.

I would say that the most extraordinary thing the health minister mentioned is that we attained and have maintained these results in these times. This is what is truly admirable. We could even say having achieved this is miraculous.

I also cannot talk, although I am talking, about the significance of this new plant being inaugurated today. I can only say that I was facing a contradiction. I was told that plant No. 3 is being inaugurated, that is the name of that plant of the Finlay Institute. It has the capacity to produce 100 million doses of vaccine per year. I asked where is the inauguration going to take place. They told me: at the Convention Center. I asked myself how is this possible. I have never seen anything like it. They told me: It is impossible to inaugurate it there because of the gardens, what it would entail, and the visitors we have, so that they could be comfortable. I said: Fine, it is impossible inaugurating it there. However: Is it possible to inaugurate it in a convention hall? But it seems it is possible to do so. This is what we are doing so far. What we need is a little bit of imagination. We need to use our imagination and imagine the plant as we speak about it, or imagining how the plant might look. Likewise, we also wanted to imagine what the (Merie) [not further identified] plants might look like. Their founder is here: [Name indistinct] [applause]

When we discussed the idea of building this and other plants, we asked ourselves what might the (Merie) plants

look like. We saw pamphlets or publicity that the plants undoubtedly look very modern. It makes a great impression. We had to consult the literature and our experience because plant No. 3 is the grandchild of plant No. 1. At plant No. 1 the practical problems of the production of the vaccine were solved once the vaccine was developed and tested. We still needed to produce it. The ideas used in plant No. 1 were very useful when it came time to design plant No. 3.

I believe it is fair to praise our scientists, a group from the Finlay, [two indistinct names], and others, our designers, our draftsmen, and engineers who were capable of giving shape to the idea of plant No. 3.—the production flow, the equipment. When one visits the completed plant now, we see that it is a truly complex project of great quality. It requires, above all, great quality and has been built with great quality. Of course, there we see the processes—I am not reveling any secrets, the culture and fermentation areas, the main areas, the purification and the aseptic area—as Conchita [Concepcion Campa, Politburo member and director general of the Finlay Research Institute] called it. I heard her use that word here. There also are the finishing and packing areas, the most complex.

We can perfectly see how it was designed with great logic and rationality—as far as I know. I am not an expert on this. I am repeating what Diaz [not further identified] said, that the plant was very good, very well designed. It seemed very rational to me. I have great confidence in the plant's production capabilities, the quality of its production on the basis that it is the third one. As Conchita mentioned, this idea came about not following the commercial criteria Maria de los Angeles [Politburo member Maria de los Angeles Garcia] spoke of. She frankly acknowledged that the plant also has significant economic aspects.

Our concern, when work began to produce a vaccine against meningococcal meningitis type b, was due to an epidemic we were experiencing. It was frustrating to see more than 1,000 cases every year and a high mortality rate, and great fear among family members that their children might contract it. We not only have to measure the direct damaged caused by an epidemic or an illness on the people affected or their relatives, but also the fear, the anxiety it provokes in millions of people. A vaccine such as this one prevents another illness, agony, in millions of people and helps them. This is the value of these vaccines, as well as that of all vaccines developed, and the ones being developed.

We have truly ambitious plans in this regard. I believe the figures Conchita presented justify it: Millions of children are still dying, while vaccines are available, from illnesses that are predictable or preventable. She [Campa] used the word preventable. We ought to consult a good writer to tell us what word we should use. She [Campa] said there are 2.1 billion or 8 million illnesses for which there are no vaccines [as heard]; there might a treatment, of course, but no prevention. The figure of 900 million children who become ill is impressive. I believe that this gives an idea of the importance of the work in the field of vaccines.

I remember, however, that a fairly well known writer, many of you might have read or heard of him, perhaps not so much the younger generations, [George] Bernard Shaw was a sworn enemy of vaccines. I read him as a student but did not internalize his prejudices on vaccines. He said that vaccines were a poison, a toxin being injected into people, etc. I believe that, objectively, that view is not sustainable. Vaccines have saved literally millions and millions of people.

We should not forget that currently the human population....[pauses] UNICEF presented me with a watch which records the projected growth of the population of Cuba and the world. I believe that yesterday it read: 5.541 billion people. Can this vary? Well, it does. Every minute there is another mass of people on earth. This piece of equipment is small; it is like a watch. It is programed to show this information.

Without vaccines the immense drops in infant mortality would not have been attained. Of course, this is not the result of the vaccines alone. There are treatments, but vaccines have been decisive because Third World countries in general do not have many medical options. However, they have the option of vaccines. The immense demographic growth we are experiencing, the increment of almost 100 million people a year, is closely tied to the development of vaccines.

Now: Are vaccines also going to be blamed for hunger in the world? Conchita, one of these days you and the Finlay are going to be partially blamed for solving the problem of how to preserve children's lives but not the problem of how to feed them. This is the great tragedy of our times. However, I do not want to discuss this further because I already said that I had nothing to add following everything you said. [chuckling]

I repeat: I had nothing to say following Maria de los Angeles address on historic aspects and strategies, and all those issues that resulted in our health program. I believe that Maria de los Angeles spoke in political terms. She explained it politically and historically. This is not forbidden. Right? I believe history has spoken here twice: spoken through the mouths of Lopez Sanchez and Maria de los Angeles. He told us the history of Finlay, and she gave us the history of medicine in the Revolution. Teja spoke of the processes and Conchita of the vaccine and the plant.

I repeat that everyone has been remembered: Finlay, the doctors—today is Doctors Day, all have been warmly congratulated. I join these congratulations wholeheartedly. Scientists were also congratulated, as well as the workers who built this center. They inaugurate it....[pauses] Well, they do not inaugurate it. The center is being inaugurated today. Tomorrow they observe Construction Workers Day in the vicinity of the plant, in a street parallel to the plant.

The efforts of many people have been required. We also cannot forget the draftsmen, engineers, and technical personnel, those who worked in the acquisition of the equipment in order that it was of the best quality, and they had to overcome many obstacles. You must realize that we have to overcome things in the midst of the blockade.

I believe that in this area we are progressing well. I believe that we have been accumulating a great potential in terms of vaccines. We are working on several vaccines.

We have not mentioned that we also are trying to make some contribution in finding a vaccine for the Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome [AIDS], one of the most terrifying plagues being experienced. It is a growing threat, a threat that grows day to day to the point that data on the situation in certain parts of the world is mindboggling: The fact that there are countries where 30 percent of the population is infected by the Human Immune Deficiency Virus. Imagine a country with 30 percent of the population infected! The importance of treatment as well as prevention of this illness! All measures adopted so far have yielded marginal results. Its spread has not been checked.

We adopted unique measures, feasible in Cuba because we began fighting AIDS when the number of cases was still very small. We are perhaps the country in the world where the AIDS epidemic has spread the least, the country in the world where it has spread the least. We have acquired an important body of experience which is being better understood daily, but which is not possible to implement when the spread is massive.

Yes, Lopez Sanchez. We have had to use certain traditional methods, certain forms of quarantines together with specialized care—not a total quarantine or anything like that, it is a flexible quarrantine. This is a system we are still improving but despite this, AIDS cases are growing in Cuba; despite this, it grows. At least we have been able to keep it at reasonably low levels. We also are working on an AIDS vaccine. We also are working on vaccines against parasites. This is very important. I believe this is one of the most important challenges for the medical sciences.

We also are working against Hemophilous meningitis, meningococcal meningitis caused by the Hemophilus bacteria. We plan to combine the vaccine for meningococcal meningitis type B and for meningococcal meningitis caused by Hemophilus into one vaccine. [as heard] This is one of the options of the Finlay Institute. In this field we are making progress.

We are making progress in many other fields of health research, science, biotechnolgy, and the pharmaceutical industry. We did not mention here another institute we just finished: the Ozone Institute. It works on ozone research. It has proven it can solve very important problems. The Molecular Immunology Center is well into its construction for the development and production of monoclonal antibodies. Perhaps, we did not mention the concept that in this development science and production go hand in hand. The factories are built next to the research center or annexed to it. First we build the research center and then the factory. This helps us to maintain constant and systematic ties between research and development. This is an idea we have tested and that we are implementing at the highest possible number of research centers with very good results.

To these tasks we have dedicated efforts and resources. Like medicine, they have not been left unattended in the special period because in addition to the benefits in human terms that this represents for our health and perhaps the rest of the world, it carries the promise of economic rewards for Cuba which we truly need. This field will probably become in the future one of the most important economic fields of Cuba.

What else can I say. Conchita thanked all of you. I thank our guests, particularly our foreign guest and also Cuban guests, because some may have had to get here on bicycles or overcame great transportation difficulties. I want to express our admiration for what (Merie) did. We hope to become partners and not competitors. His presence at the inauguration of this plant reflects his great love for medicine and vaccines. He was very busy in his country and Europe and yet he set aside a day to travel to this side of the Atlantic, arrived here at noon and returns tomorrow at 0600. We have to truly thank and admire gestures such as this. We have to thank and admire the gesture of everyone who traveled significant distances. I also want to mention the Argentine guests because they are as distant in terms of flight hours as the French. Mexicans are a little bit closer but this does not mean we appreciate their presence less. [pause] They are also closer in our hearts. This does not mean the others are not close to our hearts because I would become very unpopular and spoil Maria de los Angeles' entire effort. All are close to our hearts, although we have to stress that Mexicans are historically very close.

Without further ado, I want to thank you for having shared Medicine Day with us, the success of our researchers, the feat of our builders, and to tell you that we will always be willing to work and cooperate with you. We will always think of you. We will always keep the memory of this day and meeting. Thank you very much. [applause]

Electric Union Official Explains Power 'Deficit'

FL1012003193 Havana Radio Reloj Network in Spanish 2030 GMT 9 Dec 93

[Text] In Camaguey, Jorge Carballo, head of the National Detachment of the Electric Union, has pointed out that the generating deficit, which has been noticed throughout the country in recent days is due to breakdowns in several power plants and the shutting down of the Antonio Guiteras Power Plant in Matanzas for scheduled maintenance, which represents a loss of 330

megawatts per hour. The Antonio Guiteras power plant is the largest and most efficient power plant in the country.

During his visit to Matanzas Province, Carballo pointed out that the deficit is also due to the starting of several sugar mills. He added that until those sugar mills stabilize their sugar production, they will depend on the national reserve for their operation. Carballo went on to say that the maintenance on the Antonio Guiteras Power Plant in Matanzas is progressing well and that it is scheduled to be completed by 20 December.

Havana Radio Reports on New Remuneration System

FL0912132993 Havana Radio Rebelde Network in Spanish 1800 GMT 8 Dec 93

[Text] The Villa Clara Province CTC [Cuban Workers Federation] has reported that approximately 70 brigades of voluntary canecutters who are permanent in Villa Clara Province have decided, during the current cane harvest, to avail themselves of the payment system entitled progressive piecework [destajo progresivo]. This new formula of incentives in the form of wages for increased productivity above the norm was an experiment that produced positive results in the last sugar harvest.

With the application of this system of paying every 15 days for 12 actual days of cutting, there is a considerable decrease in the material and human resources for the cane harvest; at the same time, the canecutters are more productive.

Alarcon Speaks to European Representatives

FL1012031793 Havana Cuba Vision Network in Spanish 0100 GMT 10 Dec 93

[Text] Ricardo Alarcon, president of the National Assembly of the People's Government [ANPP], attended today's sessions of the European Meeting of Solidarity With Cuba, which began on 6 December.

Alarcon explained that the ANPP's structure is focused on trying to achieve the highest level of the people's participation in the country's decisions, despite the current circumstances. Alarcon also pointed out that democracy is impossible in a social regime based on inequality.

In answering some of the questions asked by the participants, Alarcon stated that the U.S. blockade's purpose is to establish apprehension and despair among the population. He went on to say that more than 200 hours of programming are transmitted against Cuba every day. Alarcon pointed out that, despite the end of the Cold War, military pressures against our country remain the same as in the past. Alarcon added that anywhere from 40 to 60 warships are constantly surrounding our island. In addition, Alarcon spoke about the overall concept of human rights and man's right to exercise them.

With regard to this issue, we spoke to some of the delegates during a break.

[Begin recording] [First unidentified delegate] Human Rights are not only a social and economic issue. They include participation of the people, which is the principle of these human rights

[Second unidentified delegate] It is the right of people to work and have housing, health care, and its benefits. Today in the world the exercise of these rights is much lower than it was 40 years ago.

[Third unidentified delegate] Cuba is a society where human rights are observed more than in any other society of the world. [end recording]

Guyana

President To Begin Visit to Asia 10 Dec

FL1012003293 Bridgetown CANA in English 2000 GMT 9 Dec 93

[Text] Georgetown, Guyana, 9 Dec (CANA)—Guyana President Cheddi Jagan leaves the country Friday for a four-nation swing through Asia.

The Guyana Information Service (GIS) said Jagan will head a six-man delegation to China, Malaysia, Singapore and India. The tour opens on Sunday with a state visit to China. "While there, the head of state will discuss major interests with a view to securing investment, including grant aid and extending our line of credit with the Chinese Government," the GIS reported. In China, GIS said, projects between the two countries and their future will be discussed. The Guyanese team is to be updated on a recent study of hydro-electricity here mounted by Chinese engineers. Other areas of technical and economic co-operation will be raised.

The agency said the visits to Malaysia and Singapore are working trips, with meetings scheduled with Malaysia's Prime Minister Dr Mahathir bin Mohamad, the country's Chamber of Commerce, the manufacturing association and the Malaysian Industrial Development Authority. These meetings will focus on investment and joint ventures, especially in areas of aqua-culture, forestry and tourism, GIS said. The 75 year old Guyanese leader is to take a close look at Singapore's banking system and private and public sector management, according to GIS.

While giving no details of the duration of the visits to the four countries, GIS said talks have already been scheduled with government and private sector officials on the Indian leg.

Oficials of both nations will attend the first meeting of the joint business council and pursue initiatives first

outlined at a meeting of the Guyana/Indian Joint Commission in Georgetown last month. The Guyanese team is also expected to visit agricultural and industrial projects in the world's second most populous nation. Food processing, small industries and manufacturing will be the focus of those visits.

The Guyana delegation includes junior finance minister, Barrat Jagdeo, head of the Presidential Secretariat Dr Roger Luncheon and Foreign Affairs Minister Clement Rohee. The party returns home January 2.

Haiti

Malval To Resign 15 Dec; Calls for Conference

FL0912171793 Port-au-Prince Radio Metropole in French 1145 GMT 7 Dec 93

[Text] Robert Malval's days as head of the government are numbered. His resignation is planned for 15 December. The prime minister personally announced this to the media in Washington on 6 December, explaining that his decision was irrevocable. Malval made a point of indicating, however, that he would deal with day-to-day matters until the appointment of a new prime minister by President-in-exile Jean-Bertrand Aristide.

[Begin Malval recording, in Creole] Right now the country is completely closed. Fear has spread throughout. I believe that the fact that we are leaving will create an atmosphere of debate. People will resume talking and this will create an atmosphere which, we hope, will relax the nation; there is too much tension right now. Whether I am there or not, they [not further identified] will have their weapons in hand. So the question does not lie there. The point is that, when I announced to a few people that I would resign, debate resumed. So I hope that when it is official—and I think that now it is official—more debate will ensue. Now, whether I am there or not, I will not prevent those who hold weapons from using them. To avoid that, we tried to do various things: We wrote the Army; we asked for the breakup of armed groups, and so forth. We never got any of that. I am at the end of what I can do.

[In French] As for my resignation on 15 December, unfortunately I must say that it is definite. I do not see what could make me go back on my decision. [end recording]

During this meeting with the media, the resigning prime minister also convened a conference of national reconciliation for next week in Port-au-Prince. These conferences would gather the representative groups of Haitian society and possibly a representative of President Aristide. Robert Malval points out that this national conference is desired by all of those interlocutors in Haiti. The head of the government notes that the principle of this conference was agreed upon by the United States, France, Canada, and Venezuela. Malval added that he would have a clearer idea of the UN position on that initiative on Tuesday [date not specified] during his meeting with Secretary General Butrus Butrus-Ghali.

Evoking the country's situation, the prime minister asserts that Haiti is at the end of its tether economically, socially, and politically. For Robert Malval, the national conference will represent a gathering for national security.

Questioned on the decisions of the international community which marked the process to the return of the consitituional order, Robert Malval does not mince words in labeling as a stab in the back the hurried departure of MINUHA [UN Mission in Haiti] from Port-au-Prince last October.

[Begin Malval recording, in French] I must say that since the departure of the Harlan County on 11 October, we have received many stabs in the back: the departure of the mission, the departure of all the UN employees. We never understood why. [end recording]

Legislators React

FL0912180993 Port-au-Prince Radio Metropole in French 1145 GMT 8 Dec 93

[Text] The confirmation of the coming resignation of Prime Minister Robert Malval, if it did not surprise the senators and deputies, left them waiting. How will he be replaced? That is the question being asked on 7 December at the Legislative Palace. Edner Jean collected the opinions of several legislators regarding the announcement of Malval's resignation.

[Begin recording] [Jean] Robert Malval's resignation is just a matter of days, but days expected to be difficult ones, according to the predictions of legislators of varying inclinations. Even those who were most hostile to Robert Malval's nomination as prime minister are wondering about the possible fallout of his exit. Thomas Eddy Dupiton, who labeled Malval the prime minister of embargo, did not seem to wish his departure, at least for the time being. I wanted to whip up his pride so that he would become a great stateman, Dupiton confessed.

In his mea culpa, Senator Dupiton did not spare the political sector, which he holds responsible for the blockade of the country. He also denounced the prime ministerial musical chairs already being played to replace Robert Malval:

[Dupiton, in Creole] There are many who were very pleased at hearing that Prime Minister Robert Malval was leaving, thinking: If Robert Malval could be there, I can be there, as well. Thus there is a race to become prime minister. What I am saying is that it is time to say, stop here, to all the little Josephs, little Bobs, in order to give a cahnce to the country, so that we really consider the national situation.

I have nothing against anyone. I have said that Prime Minister Robert Malval came in because of the embargo.

When I said so, it was rather to pique Robert Malval's pride so that he would show me he was not a prime minister of embargo.

[Jean] Neither did Gabriel Sanon have any soft words for the prime minister. Now that Malval is going to resign, the deputy from Cornion/Grand Bois acknowledges that Robert Malval had no more power than a corporal—a situation that led us into the deadlock we now face, comments the Alliance legislator. Sanon supports the idea of the national conference.

[Sanon, in Creole] Malval did not have the authority to govern the way he should have. We saw that he did not even have the power to appoint or fire anyone. To my surprise, I heard on 7 December that Clinton, along with Father Aristide, agreed to the holding of the national conference. We have always recommended the national conference. So I think that the real solution to the crisis is to hold that national conference, as we have always recommended.

[Jean] While they have no common stand on the matter yet, we have learned that talks have started within the Socialist bloc. Meanwhile, PANPRA [Nationalistic and Progressive Revolutionary Party of Haiti] legislators hold varying opinions on Robert Malval's announced resignation. Deputy Ancelot Venort:

[Venort, in Creole] I wonder about his decision. It is the best time to make it, given the situation that we are facing nowadays. He did not give the main reasons. We hoped he would bring them out. However, he has already confirmed this by saying he would not go back on his decision. Naturally, the country cannot die. But I say that it is a pity; we already have too many problems to deal with to include an added element that is going to sharpen and intensify the conflicts already existing. It will sharpen the contradictions. In my humble opinion, the occasion is untimely.

[Jean] Ysaac Garoon, an influential member of BP-FNCD [Parliamentary Bloc-National Front for Change and Democracy], is far from giving up. He still believes that the prime minister does not have the right to leave without giving some explanation to the population and to the legislators who trusted him.

[Garoon, in Creole] After the talks he held with the political parties, President Aristide, the United Nations, he could go to the media and explain why the country has not achieved release. At that point, he could keep to his decision. But in deciding to resign on 15 December without explanation, we think that he is irresponsible.

[Jean] Those are the initial reactions from various legislators after the announcement of the confirmation of Robert Malval's resignation. It should be noted that the legislators have not come back from vacation and the Senate is not in session. [end recording]

Malval Seeks Vatican Support for Conference

FL0912194893 Port-au-Prince Radio Metropole in French 1145 GMT 8 Dec 93

[Text] Haitian Prime Minister Robert Malval indicated that the United Kingdom would not participate directly in the conference of national reconciliation in order to attempt to solve the political crises in Haiti. He said that he would try to obtain the moral support of the Vatican in this process.

Robert Malval departed New York on 7 December for the Vatican in order to seek Vatican support for his initiative. The prime minister, who met on 7 December with UN Secretary General Butrus Butrus-Ghali, took a stand against possible reinforcement of the sanctions against Haiti. We want the church to participate in the talks; we want the church to support what we want to do, he said, in explaining that his trip to Rome had the total support of President-in-exile Jean-Bertrand Aristide. Malval said that no date has been set for this conference of national reconciliation in which all representative groups of society, including the military, should participate. However, he stated that it could start by next week, or before Christmas, and extend to mid-January. Malval specified that Dante Caputo, the international mediator in the Haitian crisis, will not participate in the talks.

Aristide Says Drug Dealers 'Sabotaging' Return

FL0912161393 Port-au-Prince Radio Metropole in Creole 2100 GMT 6 Dec 93

[Text] President Jean-Bertrand Aristide has accused drug dealers of sabotaging his return to Haiti. The president-in-exile stated that there were invisible and strong governments opposing a solution to the crisis. In an interview with the Mexican daily EXCELSIOR, Father Aristide asserted that there were some 40 to 48 tons of cocaine, estimated at $1.2 billion in value, in circulation each year in Haiti. He claims that the authors of the coup d'etat benefit from more than $200 million in drug traffic. Jean-Bertrand Aristide told the Mexican newspaper that this could explain the drug dealers' power in fighting against democracy.

The president-in-exile explained that only a total embargo and a suspension of commercial flights would allow the process to move forward and prevent the death of Haitians. He added that the Haitian crisis calls into question the credibility of the United Nations. Who could say today that the international community can solve a problem that a small group created? This is the question that President Aristide asked himself in this interview that he gave to the Mexican newspaper.

Jean-Bertrand Aristide stated that he is not indispensable, but one cannot speak of the return of democracy without Aristide's own return to power.

Sends Message to International Community

FL0912224393 Port-au-Prince Radio Metropole in French 1145 GMT 9 Dec 93

[Text] President Aristide has reasserted his adherence to the Governors Island Accord and requests its application in order to solve the crisis. In a message to the international community, the head of state stated that he has decided to take some concrete measures as soon as possible and hopes that the international community gives itself the necessary means to implement the assistance offered to Haiti, especially what is provided for in the Governors Island Accord. Ansy Rose Resignac reports:

It is with the purpose of giving hope and security to the Haitian people that the head of state considers urgent the application of the 11 points of the Governors Island Accord. The priest-president stresses the escalation of violence, marked by the murder of several hundred citizens, including the murder of the justice minister, the blocking of the process that should have led to his return on 30 October, and the degradation of the economic, political, social and moral situation of the country.

The measures that Jean-Bertrand Aristide mentions go from the deployment of the UN Mission to Haiti, MINUHA, to the return to the country of the head of state, which would result primarily in the lifting of the sanctions and the resumption of aid. Jean-Bertrand Aristide also includes in the list of what is necessary the following: the immediate return of the international civilian mission; the appointment of new Army and police chiefs; the re-formation of the General Staff of the Armed Forces; and a parliament vote on the laws provided for by the Governors Island Accord and the New York pact. Furthemore, the president of the Republic thinks that the creation of conditions of security for the return home of the misplaced peoples, political exiles and of legislators currently abroad is indispensable. Also indispensible are an information campaign by the missions mentioned previously, judicial reforms, the separation of the police from the Army, and the professionalization of the military institution. In the preamble of his message, Jean-Bertrand Aristide renewed his trust in the international community, while reasserting that the Governors Island Accord remains the best available means for extricating the country from the crisis. He adds, and I quote: The safeguard for the nation can be possible only with the return to constitutional order, implying the return of the president of the Republic as well as the return of those elected in 16 December 1990 and 20 January 1991 to their functions and a return to an atmosphere of peace and conciliation. The head of the state-in-exile remains convinced that this safeguard can only last with the undertaking of a common objective in the country by the political, democratic, and social forces, an objective which is the establishment of a state of law. Finally, Jean-Bertrand Aristide renewed his congratulations to the Haitian people for their determination in the struggle for democracy. He asked the people to remain faithful to the ideals of peace and justice, to support the initiatives of the international community, and he reminds the people that mobilization remains the principal lever to get out of the crisis.

Armed Forces Set New Rules for Fuel Supply

FL0912205893 Port-au-Prince Radio Metropole in French 1145 GMT 9 Dec 93

[Text] The first news this morning is the decision made by the Haitian Armed Forces, in agreement with the oil company officials, to suspend the delivery of fuel to service stations for more than a week.

The public is informed that in order to guarantee better distribution of the fuel stock available in the country on the occasion of the end of the year holidays, a meeting was held on 8 December between the oil company distribution officials and those of the National Association of Distributors of Oil Products. Some measures have been adopted: the suspension from 9 to 15 December inclusive of the sale and delivery of fuel by the distribution companies; the closing of the service stations from 9 to 19 December inclusive for restocking; and the resumption of deliveries to the service stations according to the previously established schedule, which is:

Monday, Wednesday, and Friday from 0800 to 1600 for gas and oil; Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday from 0800 to 1600 for gasoline. Each vehicle will have a sale limit of $30.00 per vehicle [as heard] at the pump. And, the suspension until further notice of any authorization to purchase fuel for stocking purposes. However, priority to resume stocking will be granted to the hospitals, to the electricity company, to the water company, to the telephone company, to AAM [not further unidentified], to the National Port Authority, to the banks and others. All the perceding is according to this press release of the Haitian Armed Forces staff.

Political Parties Call for Demonstrations

FL0912195193 Port-au-Prince Radio Metropole in French 2000 GMT 6 Nov 93

[Text] A group of political parties is calling for demonstrations on 11 December throughout the country. Those parties, which include the MNP-28 [National Patriotic Movement of 28 November] of Dejean Belizaire and the MDN [Mobilization for National Development] of Hubert De Ronceray, intend to press for lifting the economic sanctions on Haiti imposed by the UN Security Council. Let us listen to Jean-Andre Victor, member of MNP-28:

[Begin recording] All social sectors of the population are asked to demonstrate in all the corners and recesses of the country against the embargo and the blockade. We also ask all the nation's vital forces, regardless of their political or ideological linkage, to demonstrate against

the embargo and the blockade on 11 December at 1000 at Heroes of Independence Square. [end recording]

Groups Seek Intervention of Multinational Force

FL0912161693 Port-au-Prince Radio Metropole in French 1145 GMT 6 Dec 93

[Text] Various people's organizations have written to the UN Secretary General to request the implementation of the Governors Island accord. The leaders of 40 people's organizations and neighborhood groups issued a letter addressed to the UN Secretary General, and another addressed to President-in-exile Aristide, requesting the continuation of the application of the accord signed 3 July on Governors Island. In the current context, it is not a question of sending several missions to investigate the effects of the embargo, but rather of sending a multinational, military force capable of advancing the accord, the two documents state. Accusing the Haitian oligarchy of lining its own pocket by keeping the Haitian populace in misery, the organizations urged the president-in-exile to solicit the intervention of a multinational force to assist the population to some sort of relief, unquote. [no opening quote as heard]

Agenda for President's Visit to PRC, Japan

PA0912170393 Mexico City NOTIMEX in Spanish 0457 GMT 9 Dec 93

[Text] Mexico City, 8 Dec (NOTIMEX)—Mexican President Carlos Salinas de Gortari will make an official visit to the People's Republic of China and a working visit to Japan. The visits' common goal is "to expand cooperation and political understanding alternatives." A communique issued today by the Secretariat of Foreign Relations of Mexico (SRE) confirms that President Salinas will be in the PRC from 16-19 December and in Japan from 19-22 December.

The SRE added that during his stay in the PRC, Salinas de Gortari will meet in Beijing with local officials with whom he will sign cooperation agreements. Salinas de Gortari will also inaugurate the Mexican Consulate in Shanghai. The communique indicated that the Mexican president's visit includes a meeting with Jiang Zemin, China's president; Li Peng, State Council premier, and Zhu Rongji, State Council vice premier and Bank of China president, as well as other local officials. Salinas de Gortari's agenda in the PRC includes the signing of agreements to promote political, economic, and cultural relations between both nations. Prominent among these is a protocol on the establishment of a permanent mechanism on political consultations at the Foreign Ministry level.

The SRE indicated that on this occasion agreements will be signed with the PRC on technical and scientific cooperation, as well as in the fields of chemistry and petrochemistry, archeology, fishing, and rural development. A meeting is also slated with Shanghai authorities and businessmen. The SRE communique added that President Salinas de Gortari will participate in a working lunch with Mexican and Chinese businessmen sponsored by the Chinese Council for the Promotion of Foreign Economic and Trade Relations.

In Japan, the Mexican president will be granted a special audience by Emperor Akihito, and he will give a lecture at the UN University. Visits to Osaka and Kyoto are also on his agenda in this Asian nation. In the Japanese capital, the Mexican president will meet with Prime Minister Morihiro Hosokawa and will have a working lunch with the Japan's Confederation of Economic Organizations (Keidanren). Later, Salinas will meet with investors and the presidents of the most important Japanese banks. This will be followed by his lecture on Mexico and the Pacific Rim at the UN University.

Then Salinas de Gortari will inaugurate the Mexican Consulate in Osaka—the island's second largest industrial zone—after which he will meet with Kansai businessmen and members of the Confederation of the Victims of the Atomic Bomb Attacks on Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

The SRE indicated that in Kyoto, Salinas de Gortari will inaugurate the Institute of Mexican Culture and will visit an exhibition of Mexican University of Foreign Studies of Kyoto, a Mexican-inspired exhibition called "Takuhon" painted by artist Kojin Toneyama.

The SRE communique indicated that the Mexican president will conclude his visit to the Orient with a ceremony in Tokyo, where he will meet with Mexican residents in Japan before embarking on his return trip to Mexico on 22 December.

Attorney General Details Arrest of Drug Kingpin

PA1012033693 Mexico City Canal 13 Television Azteca Network in Spanish 1300 GMT 8 Dec 93

[From the "Good Morning From Mexico" newscast]

[Text] The Attorney General's Office has shown eight armored vehicles, jewels, weapons, and photographs of Francisco Rafael Arellano Felix, the oldest of 10 drug-trafficking brothers. Meanwhile, Attorney General Jorge Carpizo stated he will continue the struggle against drug trafficking. Raul Sanchez Carrillo filed the following report.

[Begin recording] [Sanchez] The Attorney General's Office presented a detailed and accurate report on the causes leading to the arrest of the oldest of the Arellano Felix brothers. Francisco Rafael, 44, is facing three cases in the United States and three in Mexico. He has been charged with possession of guns, possession of illegal substances, and violation of a bail agreement in the United States. Additionally, in Mexico Francisco Rafael Arellano Felix, the oldest of 10 brothers, is facing justice.

Attorney General Jorge Carpizo stated:

[Carpizo] The Attorney General's Office has concentrated all its efforts on this investigation, through its operating organs of the Federal Judicial Police and the National Institute for Fighting Drugs, as well as by forming special investigation groups devoted to the case.

We thank society for the support they are giving us. This Mexican victory is partly due to the information received by way of the anonymous report system. We have said and reiterated that this struggle against drug trafficking can only be won if society and the government act together. Mexican society is carrying out deeds in this regard.

[Sanchez] Francisco Rafael Arellano Felix was arrested together with two minors, who were placed in the custody of the DIF [System for Complete Family Development] of Tijuana. The persons who appeared before authorities to demand custody of said minors in Tijuana, Baja California, were unable to demonstrate they were directly related to these minors.

However, the luck of Francisco Rafael Arellano Felix and his four accomplices is already in the hands of the judge of the High Security Prison in Almoloya, Juarez.

[Carpizo] Francisco Rafael Arellano Felix is the oldest brother of Ramon, Javier, and Banjamin Arellano Felix, for whom arrest warrants have been issued for federal offenses. They allegedly head one of the most important drug trafficking organizations in the country. The Attorney General's Office has fully identified the members of this family. Of them, several—however they are not directly involved in drug trafficking—allegedly assist their brothers in laundering money, building safe houses, and administering the family's enormous fortune.

[Sanchez] Jewels, eight armored vehicles, heavy-caliber weapons, fragmentation grenades, and sophisticated radio telephone devices, including a computer, are now part of what federal agents, through the agents of a special group of the Attorney General's Office, managed to seize in this important blow to national and international drug trafficking.

Francisco Rafael Arellano Felix had changed his appearance. However, the actions of federal agents permitted authorities not only to apprehend him, but to obtain pictures of every Arellano Felix family member, as well as of other relatives implicated or allegedly involved in this activity.

Secretariat Reaffirms Defense of Mexican Workers in U.S.

PA0912162393 Mexico City NOTIMEX in Spanish 0427 GMT 9 Dec 93

[Text] Mexico City, 8 Dec (NOTIMEX)—The Foreign Relations Secretariat reaffirmed today its decision to support and defend the rights of Mexican workers in the United States. On restating its decision, the Foreign Secretariat cited the positive results obtained in the case of Mexican cucumber and sweet potato pickers who were paid wages below those outlined in an established wage scale.

The Foreign Secretariat said the attorney who defended the workers had the cooperation of the consular section of the Mexican Embassy in Washington, as well as the secretariat, which joined efforts to locate the workers.

Mexican workers employed as cucumber and sweet potato pickers in North Carolina in the United States received wages that varied by as much as 100,000 new pesos, according to a communique issued by the secretariat. The Farmworkers Legal Services of North Carolina delivered the checks to those who worked in September and October of 1989. They received wages below those stipulated in their contract and in the HW-A permits.

A suit was filed against their employer Dale Bone. Pamela Distefano, an attorney from the Farmworkers Legal Services of North Carolina, which supervises the distribution of documents, defended the 125 Mexican peasants.

Preliminary Figures Give PRI 83 Mayoralties in Hidalgo

PA0912172093 Mexico City Canal 13 Television Azteca Network in Spanish 1300 GMT 7 Dec 93

[From the "Good Morning From Mexico" newscast]

[Text] The preliminary results of the 5 December elections in Hidalgo were released on Monday. According to the figures, the Institutional Revolutionary Party [PRI] won 83 of the 84 posts for mayor in the state. (Mario Viorrey Mendoza), the state's PRI leader, said that with these results the PRI recovers five municipal seats held by the opposition.

The State Electoral Council admitted that even though elections were peaceful, absenteeism reached the dangerous level of 60 percent. Absenteeism should never win. Voting is an obligation and a right.

Costa Rica

Foreign Trade Minister, President View Meeting With Clinton

PA1012024093 San Jose LA NACION in Spanish 2 Dec 93 p 27A

[Report by Nelson Murillo]

[Text] Miami, U.S.A.—The approval of the Third Economic Adjustment Program (PAE III) by the Legislative Assembly will pave the way for our country to join NAFTA, Foreign Trade Minister Roberto Rojas stated yesterday in this city.

Upon stating that it is necessary to reach national consensus on NAFTA—which Mexico, the United States, and Canada will implement on 1 January—the official said: "If the PAE III is approved by Congress, Costa Rica will have better conditions to negotiate." He stated that the economic program signed with the World Bank involves financial reforms and an opening in the marketing of insurances which, according to him, are fundamental so that our nation can travel through the path of free trade.

Upon assessing a meeting held on 30 November at the White House between Central American presidents and U.S. President Bill Clinton, Rojas termed "very important" the announcement made by the Washington government not to leave the region unprotected once NAFTA goes into effect. However, he declared that now everything depends on the interest each country shows in consolidating the reforms necessary to open their economies and join the aforementioned commercial agreement.

Costa Rican Advantage

President Rafael Angel Calderon said that Costa Rica could be the first nation of the Isthmus to join NAFTA. He remarked that the meeting between Central American presidents and Clinton "met the expectations" because the United States said it would not neglect the area, while endorsing the expansion of NAFTA to all the Western Hemisphere. Calderon said that an important aspect of the discussion is that Washington would in the short term match the benefits of the Caribbean Basin Initiative (CBI) with certain clauses of the free trade agreement while the political negotiations to join NAFTA are in progress.

The head of state appointed Roberto Rojas to represent our country before a high-level joint commission (between Central America and United States) to follow up on NAFTA and strengthen the CBI. Rojas said that before presenting a position to that commission he would consult the presidential candidates and private sector representatives on which policies are more advisable at this time. "I will start to listen to suggestions in the next few days to reach a consensus position," he pointed out.

He, however, noted that matters would be much easier if the National Assembly approved PAE III after the 6 February 1994 elections. This bill was sent by the Executive Branch to the Congress for ratification. Although he does not know when the joint commission will start meeting, the foreign trade and economy minister said that "polemic reforms" will come up, and thus, gaining membership in NAFTA will not be as easy as some think.

Minister Rojas pointed out that Clinton asked the U.S. Congress to recommend in July which Latin American countries should join NAFTA. He added that it is possible that Chile will be the first, because it has made much progress with regard to economic reforms.

Calderon said that the next government will be responsible for continuing negotiations on the free trade agreement. He added: "Regardless of who wins the elections, the country will have to continue on this path because there is no looking back." The president thinks that relations with the United States "are much better than a month and a half ago." He will return to San Jose today at 1500 aboard a regular LACSA flight.

Plane Carrying Presidential Candidate Figueres Said Missing

PA1012012793 Mexico City NOTIMEX in Spanish 0041 GMT 10 Dec 93

[Text] San Jose, 9 Dec (NOTIMEX)—The plane in which Costa Rican presidential candidate Jose Maria Figueres was traveling was reported missing in the southern part of the country, local television channel seven reported tonight.

Authorities have neither confirmed nor denied this report, however.

Figueres, the candidate for the opposition National Liberation Party (PLN) for next February's elections, had scheduled political activities in the region of Coto Brus, near the Panamanian border.

Makes Emergency Landing

PA1012015893 Panama City ACAN in Spanish 0120 GMT 10 Dec 93

[Text] San Jose, 9 Dec (ACAN-EFE)—A plane in which Jose Maria Figueres, presidential candidate for the social democratic opposition in Costa Rica, was travelling today made an emergency landing in the southern part of the country, where the politician was headed to participate in a public activity.

The aircraft, which was en route to Coto Brus, near the Panamanian border, was forced to make an emergency landing in Coto 47 due to bad weather affecting that region, according to National Liberation Party (PLN, social democratic) sources in San Jose.

Official sources have not yet offered information on the mishap.

In addition to Figueres, four other people were travelling in the aircraft. They, as well as the presidential candidate, were not harmed. The Costa Rican presidential candidate's event, scheduled for 1900 (0001 GMT) [as received] in Coto Brus, was delayed at least an hour, while Figueres travelled from Coto 47 to his destination.

Figueres is one of the two candidates who stand a chance of winning the Costa Rican Presidency in the upcoming 6 February elections. According to the latest polls, the other candidate who has a possibility of winning is Miguel Angel Rodriguez of the ruling Social Christian Unity Party (PUSC).

El Salvador

FMLN Member Mario Lopez Killed in Gun Attack

PA0912200693 San Salvador Canal Dos Television in Spanish 1900 GMT 9 Dec 93

[Text] At exactly 1030 [1630 GMT], according to preliminary investigations, two heavily armed individuals in a vehicle attacked [Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front—FMLN] Commander Salvatierra, [nom de guerre of] former Commander Mario Lopez of the PRTC [Revolutionary Party of Central American Workers] and his bodyguard Lucio Herrera.

It is already unofficially known that Mr. Mario Lopez died just a few minutes ago.

We have a video of the operating room. The press is here on standby for news. We will try to get in as close as we can to try and obtain statements from some former commander or some member of the FMLN political commission. We have not been able to get in.

The attack took place at about 1030 this morning on 5 November Street, near the San Miguelito market.

The press is trying to get in; it is difficult to get into the operating room to learn more details of the death of former commander Mario Lopez. This is all we have from the Rosales Hospital but will try and contact a member of the FMLN political commission.

FMLN Blames Death Squads

PA1012012993 Paris AFP in Spanish 2229 GMT 9 Dec 93

[Text] San Salvador, 9 Dec (AFP)—The Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front (FMLN) accused rightist "death squads" of murdering Mario Lopez (60), a former guerrilla commander, in an incident today at noon in San Salvador. Visibly shaken, FMLN leader Roberto Roca [Francisco Jovel] told the media that the "most regrettable" thing is that Lopez' shooting came 24 hours after the installation of a commission to investigate outlawed armed groups. The commission is comprised of UN delegates and local authorities.

Roca stated that Lopez' assailants—"those outlawed armed groups, as the government calls them—should be called what the people call them: death squads." The FMLN leader asked for a thorough investigation of the incident and security for Lopez' bodyguard, who was wounded in the same attack and whom Roca regards as a major witness in the investigation.

Lopez, a professor, is the third top FMLN leader to be slain during a wave of crime and threats against members of the former guerrilla group, which, after becoming a political party one year ago, is participating in the electoral campaign for the 1994 elections. Francisco Velis and Heleno Castro, who had been guerrilla field commanders during the civil war, were also gunned down in different areas of the country in two separate incidents on 25 and 30 October.

President Alfredo Cristiani said on 8 December that former commander Castro's death was the result of common crime.

Lopez Assassination Sparks Protests

PA1012040993 San Salvador Canal Doce Television in Spanish 0300 GMT 10 Dec 93

[From the "Up-to-Date" newscast]

[Text] This afternoon, in light of the assassination of the former guerrilla commander [Mario Lopez], the area surrounding the University of El Salvador again became the setting for protests. Several hooded university students blocked the streets with buses and burned an official vehicle. The same place that during the 1980's was the stage of disturbances by university groups was today the stage for a protest by this community over the assassination of former guerrilla commander Mario Lopez.

[Begin unidentified protester recording; shouting] No to the squads! No to the squads! [end recording]

Covering their faces with handkerchiefs, dozens blocked the street with buses and, after burning tires, set a CEL [Lempa River Hydroelectric Executive Commission] vehicle on fire.

[Begin unidentified protester recording; in progress] ...and we, as university students, are responding tacitly and concretely to the attitudes of the death squads and Arena's [Nationalist Republican Alliance] puppet regime.

Let's go. Let's go. [end recording]

The citizens have different opinions on these incidents.

[Begin unidentified woman recording] In light of these types of actions, which we know are carried out by the death squads, I believe we all have the right to defend

ourselves. I do not know how this activity began, but I congratulate the companions. [end recording]

[Begin unidentified man recording] This year, with the peace agreements, I think this type of action should no longer take place; we had practically forgotten them, but, unfortunately, we have to go on living with this nightmare. [end recording]

The protest did not last over 30 minutes, and after carrying it out, the protesters returned to the university, from which they came.

Violence that doubtlessly evokes memories of the 1980's; violence that could make us regress in our country's pacification process if it continues emerging.

PDC, ARENA Comment

PA1012043993 San Salvador Canal Doce Television in Spanish 0300 GMT 10 Dec 93

[Report by Edwin Gongora; from the "Up-to-Date" newscast]

[Text] The Christian Democratic Party, PDC, has said the murder of former FMLN [Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front] commander Mario Lopez is due to the government's refusal to implement the Truth Commission recommendations. The Nationalist Republican Alliance, ARENA, rejected the PDC statement, but admitted the current process is facing a serious situation as a result of recent acts of violence.

It is clear that despite the apparent efforts to stop the crime wave that has swept the country in the past few days, it has not subsided. The PDC condemned the murder, and linked this action to the delay in complying with the peace agreements.

[Begin unidentified PDC representative recording] This new murder, just as the previous ones, is a consequence of the government's indifference. In addition, the fact the ARENA candidate has said all the agreements will be complied with, except aspects concerning the Truth Commission recommendations, is regrettable. [end recording]

Meanwhile, the ARENA vice presidential candidate [Enrique Borgo Bustamente] also condemned the action. Although he said that the PDC's arguments are groundless, he admitted those actions affect the electoral process.

[Begin Borgo Bustamante recording] I believe the situation is very serious and that we should put an end to violence and hatred. [end recording]

Galindo [not further identified], a former member of the government negotiating commission, said those actions are a result of the current tension in the country, adding he hopes the situation will change once and for all.

[Begin Galindo recording] I hope legality will prevail, and that the impunity that existed in the past will not continue. [end recording]

In that regard, Galindo said he hopes the joint commission officially installed on 8 December will have the necessary credibility to produce convincing results.

Politicians Welcome Death Squad Commission

PA0912161993 San Salvador Radio Cadena YSU in Spanish 1800 GMT 8 Dec 93

[Report by Boris Zelada from the "YSU Radio News" newscast]

[Text] The swearing in of Drs. Jose Leandro Echeverria and Juan Jeronimo Castillo as members of a commission to investigate the death squads was well received by deputies of various political persuasions represented in the main state branch. Dr. Ruben Zamora, of Democratic Convergence, voiced his hope that the commission will be characterized by honor and credibility. He called for the immediate release of the results of the upcoming investigations:

[Begin Zamora recording] We are interested in seeing an end to murders. Thus, if there are recommendations that should start to be implemented within 15 days, I think that the government and this commission are obliged to reveal them immediately, and the government must implement them immediately. I do not think that we should sacrifice human lives solely because of the elections; quite the contrary, I think this is inhuman. [end recording]

Meanwhile, Rafael Moran Orellana, of the National Conciliation Party, said that the criminal lawyers who were appointed to the commission enjoy the required credibility to carry out the investigation with which they were tasked.

[Begin Moran recording] I think they are honorable. We have seem them in action for a long time. They enjoy a lot of credibility and respect within Salvadoran society. I think that they have a great responsibility. They must achieve results for the Salvadoran people in six months, as was established. I have no doubt they will make every effort and use their abilities to investigate and determine who is responsible for these groups, if they indeed exist, that act outside the law.

I hope their results will convince Salvadorans. I think this commission was established partly because of international pressure. It was also among the recommendations of the Truth Commission. [end recording]

Deputy Gloria Salguero Gross, of the Nationlist Republican Alliance [ARENA], said the commission, sworn in by President Alfredo Cristiani, will be able to conduct its investigation freely because it will enjoy full support.

[Begin recording] [Salguero] I think that if President Cristiani appointed these individuals it is because he

knows them well. I fully support the president's appointment, not only on a personal basis, but as an ARENA member.

[Unidentified reporter] Do you think the investigation will get to the bottom of the matter?

[Salguero] That is what we want; that is the goal. The government of the Republic and ARENA have provided categorical examples of this at all times. In the same way that we seek peace, we also want to eradicate these kinds of criminal groups, regardless of their persuasion. We do not want these kind of people in our society. They must be isolated and pay in prison for their acts. [end recording]

Dr. Ricardo Acevedo Peralta of the Christian Democratic Party called for full support for the commission in order to eradicate the death squads once and for all.

[Begin Acevedo recording] I think this commission is timely. I think it has an important task at hand. I have always referred to the need for advisory work to lead institutions, which are already empowered to do so by our constitution, to officially fight all these criminal anomalies and human rights violations. [end recording]

The commission that will investigate the death squads is made up of Dr. Diego Garcia-Sayan, of Peruvian origin and chief of the human rights division of UN Observers for El Salvador; Dr. Carlos Molina Fonseca, Salvadoran human rights ombudsman; Dr. Jose Leandro Echeverria, president of the Legislative Assembly until October 1979 when there was a coup in the country, president of the Salvadoran Coffee Association, and defense lawyer for a well-known kidnapper during the administration of President Jose Napoleon Duarte; and Dr. Juan Jeronimo Castillo, who in the mid-1980's prosecuted a kidnapping case from the Prosecutor General's Office.

FMLN's Ruben Zamora Says Death Squads Must be Stopped

PA0912202493 San Salvador Radio Farabundo Marti Network in Spanish 1800 GMT 8 Dec 93

[From the "Facing the Moment" newscast]

[Text] FMLN-CD [Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front-Democratic Convergence] presidential candidate Ruben Zamora says democratic elections cannot be held if the death squads are not dismantled.

The FMLN-CD candidates today supported the investigation of the death squads by a commission that enjoys autonomy, credibility and national consensus. The commission will be formed by the human rights ombudsman, Onusal [UN Observers for El Salvador] Human Rights Division Chief Diego Garcia-Sayan and two government representatives.

[Begin Zamora recording] Democracy requires a climate of calm among the people; the death squad genocides must be stopped and defeated now, before the electoral campaign really gains momentum and the situation becomes unmanageable. [end recording]

Zamora said he is expecting a positive response from UN Secretary General Butrus-Ghali concerning the formation of an independent investigative body.

[Begin Zamora recording] Onusal's human rights division has been doing a good job but I read the two last reports they released prior to the murders of Commanders Veliz and Carmelo, and it was quite obvious that Onusal's human rights division was alerting us to the fact that the situation is deteriorating; however, the warning was not heeded in time. [end recording]

The dismantling of the death squads is a challenge for the country and for peace, said Zamora, the presidential candidate of the left-wing coalition.

UN Secretary General Butrus-Ghali has announced that the commission will be formed by attorneys Jose Leandro Echeverria and Juan Jeronimo Castillo who will represent the government, the human rights ombudsman and the chief of Onusal's Human Rights Division.

Candidate Zamora Proposes 'More Realistic' U.S. Relations

PA0912161893 Mexico City NOTIMEX in Spanish 1822 GMT 1 Dec 93

[Text] Madrid, 1 Dec (NOTIMEX)—Ruben Zamora, the Salvadoran center-left presidential candidate, has asserted here that he will attempt to find a new type of relationship with the United States; one that is "more realistic" and features "shared objectives."

Zamora, who ended a two-day working tour to Spain today, is the presidential candidate for the Democratic Convergence (CD) and the former guerrilla alliance of the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front (FMLN).

In an interview with NOTIMEX, he said the opposition victory in the Honduran elections was "positive," and he added that he foresees an imminent change in the Central American political scene. He is confident of being one of the candidates with the most votes in the March 1994 elections, while he warned of the existence of "obstacles to a legitimate election."

The Salvadoran politician said there is now a better opportunity for finding a "rational" relationship with Washington in the wake of the "Cold War" and the disappearance of the U.S. argument of a "communist threat." He said the two countries have "common objectives, such as democratization, which is necessary for us and beneficial to the United States."

Zamora also said the general elections in March could be "the most legitimate and free elections in our entire history, as well as the most important of this century."

He pointed out that there is still fear among the people because of recent "death squad" activity. Some 30 percent of the population still has not registered to vote. Zamora also claimed that the government "is abusing its ability to carry out propaganda activities in favor of its candidate." He said Alfredo Cristiani's administration is playing an "unfair game, which is undemocratic," adding that this must be overcome "to ensure a legitimate election."

To do away with the "death squads," Zamora demanded the immediate establishment of an already agreed upon investigation commission to help fight against the impunity of these groups. He also called for the completion of the process of forming the National Civilian Police as outlined in the 1992 peace accords.

Zamora believes his candidacy could receive the most votes in next year's election, but he said he would not win an absolute majority over his main adversary, Armando Calderon Sol of the ruling Nationalist Republican Alliance (Arena). In a runoff election, the CD/FMLN ticket "would have a better chance at expanding its alliance via the support of other parties," he said.

The Salvadoran politician stated that the opposition victory by the Liberal Party of Honduras "ended the continuity of the conservative sectors" in Honduras. "The defeated government candidate, Oswaldo Ramos Soto, is a friend of ARENA, and his election would have indicated a stronger shift to the right in Honduras," he stressed. Zamora added that the Honduran elections are "a first step in the renewal" of the Central American political scene, which could include opposition victories in Costa Rica, El Salvador, and Panama, where elections are scheduled next year. "I hope Central America will begin moving in a different direction within eight or nine months time," he said.

Zamora affirmed that unfreezing $40 million in U.S. economic aid for Nicaragua marked "a less ideological treatment and a more realistic one" by the White House when viewing the Central American isthmus. On 30 November in Washington, President William Clinton announced the release of funds to the Managua government following a meeting with the five Central American presidents. The money had been withheld for the past two years at the request of ultra-right-wing Senator Jesse Helms.

The presidential candidate also said he was in favor of Central America participating in regional economic integration efforts such as NAFTA. A CD/FMLN government, he explained, would strive to "identify our place in the globalization of the world's economy and fight to maintain that place under the best possible conditions for our country."

Zamora had visited Sweden, Norway, Germany, and Italy before flying to Spain. From there he will continue onto Belgium. The presidential candidate pointed out that he was making this European tour to explain El Salvador's reality and to recruit support for his campaign.

He said he had found "a high level of awareness about the importance" of the elections in El Salvador among his European hosts, including government officials and the leaders of political and nongovernmental organizations. He also found "deep concern" about the recent decay in security following the reappearance of the "death squads," as well as an enormous will to help in making El Salvador's next election a truly honest, legitimate, and democratic one.

Zamora, who leads the Social Christian Peoples Movement, which is one of several groups within the CD, is traveling with Salvador Samoya, a leader of the FMLN.

Small-Business Association President on Labor Code Talks

PA0912232093 San Salvador Canal Doce Television in Spanish 0300 GMT 9 Dec 93

[Report by Edwin Gongora; from the "Up-to-Date" newscast]

[Text] The Association of Salvadoran Businessmen and Industrialists, one of the unions consisting of the country's small-business sector, has argued that approval of the Labor Code must result from a consensus among the parties and not from pressure. The negotiations surrounding the proposal to create unions for unskilled and independent workers, which the labor sector advocated, remain at a standstill. Despite U.S. threats to suspend the General Preference System [SGP] if reforms to the Labor Code are not approved, the president of the Association of Salvadoran Small Businesses has stated categorically that preparation of the new document must result from a consensus among the three representative sectors and not from pressure.

[Begin Vilanova (first name not given), president of the Association of Salvadoran Small Businesses, recording] We will not be pressured by Salvadoran Government or U.S. threats to suspend the SGP, because if the U.S. Government wants to take away our preferences, it will do so regardless of what happens to the Labor Code. I want to clarify that we will act according to our conscience, to what best suits workers and employers. [end recording]

So far, only 41 of the 49 amendments proposed by the OIT [International Labor Organization] have been approved by a consensus among the parties represented in the Concerted Effort Forum. There is disagreement, however, over the creation of a union of unskilled and independent workers, something private enterprise and the government consider unnecessary. Private enterprise and the government also oppose an increase in the number of union leaders, because small businesses

would be affected. Vilanova believes that the small-business sector role [word indistinct] the forum is justified.

[Begin Vilanova recording] I believe that the best answer that industrial sectors have given is to have approved almost 41 of the 49 OIT proposals. In this respect, we believe that the labor sector will pay the highest political cost, because more than 200,000 farmers, especially the ones who work in the sugarcane industry, will be affected the most. [end recording]

The representatives of the small-business sector have asked Jorge Shafik Handal—the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front's candidate to the San Salvador mayor's office—to present his labor platform to clear any misgivings they may have due to Handal's background.

Honduras

President Said Irked by U.S. Warning on Preference System

PA1012042893 Hamburg DPA in Spanish 0207 GMT 10 Dec 93

[Excerpt] Tegugicalpa, 9 Dec (DPA)—President Rafael Leonardo Callejas was annoyed today by a new warning by the U.S. Government, which threatened to exclude the country from the General Preference System (SGP).

Through the SGP, Honduras exports traditional and nontraditional products to the U.S. market without tariffs, but, according to a notice by the Bill Clinton government to Honduras, that preference may be eliminated.

President Callejas stated that the U.S. dissatisfaction is related to a future decision by the Supreme Court of Justice on the expropriation to U.S. citizens of properties acquired through a violation of local laws.

He cited the case of the "United Nations Park," better known in Tegucigalpa as "El Picacho," which is part of a gigantic observation point that overlooks the city. A U.S. citizen claims it belongs to him, but the park is patrimony to the nation.

"Then comes the U.S. pressure demanding claim, but in this case justice has one nationality," President Callejas stated, visibly irked by the Clinton administration plan.

He added that "either we work under the conditions imposed by the United States, or the sole option is to withdraw from the SGP." According to the Honduran president, the U.S. warning "goes beyond" that of relations between countries.

This is the second time the U.S. Government has pressured Honduras with the SGP. [passage omitted]

Callejas Rejects Castro Presence During Inaguration

PA1012025893 Mexico City NOTIMEX in Spanish 0147 GMt 10 Dec 93

[Text] Tegucigalpa, 9 Dec (NOTIMEX)—President Leonardo Callejas today expressed his disagreement with the presence of Cuban President Fidel Castro at the inauguration of his successor, Carlos Roberto Reina, set for 27 January.

During a news conference, Callejas based his opinion on the fact that Honduras does not have diplomatic relations with Cuba, whose government "was condemned by the United Nations." During the news conference, the president indicated he would, however, respect the decision by the new Reina government.

Sources at the Liberal Party of Honduras, which won the 28 November general elections, had announced they would invite President Castro, but Vice President-elect Walter Lopez Reyes denied the report to local news media. The president-elect recently told the foreign media that his government will analyze the possibility of resuming diplomatic relations with Cuba, which has been expelled from the United Nations [as received] since 1962.

Nicaragua

Ministers Resign En Masse to Allow Reshuffle

PA0912201093 Managua Radio Sandino in Spanish 1100 GMT 9 Dec 93

[From the "Events" newscast]

[Text] The ministers have resigned en masse. All cabinet ministers resigned at the beginning of this week. President Violeta Chamorro now can reshuffle or retain her top officials, as is usually done at the end of each year.

It is taken for granted in the presidency that the Nicaraguan Natural Resources and Environment Institute [IRENA] will be upgraded to the rank of ministry. The same will occur with the team of economic advisers who will form the Planning Ministry. Consequently, Julio Cardenas and Jaime Incer, director general of IRENA, will become cabinet members in the coming year.

The resignation of the presidency minister is being considered by Antonio Lacayo, who is reviewing the topic at the express request of President Chamorro. Emilio Pereira reportedly will be replaced by Health Minister Martha Palacios. She, in turn, will be replaced by a physician who has the confidence of the president.

Ortega Comments on Presidential Candidacy, Recontras

PA1012001293 Managua LA PRENSA in Spanish 4 Dec 93 pp 1, 12

[Article by Roberto Orozco]

[Text] General Humberto Ortega, the commander in chief of the Sandinist People's Army [EPS], implied yesterday for the first time that he may run for the Presidency once he becomes a civilian.

After answering reporters' questions about his presidential aspirations, Ortega said: "Once I retire from the Army and become a civilian in a legal and civilized manner, I will consider what is in my best interest." Ortega said this during a military demonstration by the EPS Tactical Combat Group held yesterday in the plains surrounding the Momotombo Volcano to commemorate the Day of the Motherland's Soldier. Ortega stated: "So far, I don't think the issue now is whether or not I can be a good candidate, but to solve the problems and then, once I become a civilian, I will see what is in my best interest." However, when a reporter asked him if there was any possibility of him being a candidate, Ortega answered with a brief: "We will talk about that later."

The exercise carried out by 800 EPS soldiers yesterday seeks to strengthen the EPS defense plans to fight rearmed groups. According to Ortega, tolerance for these groups "ended with the Amnesty Law," which was issued recently by the government of President Violeta Chamorro for irregulars to surrender their weapons. Ortega promised that by year's end, there will be no more rearmed groups (recontras) operating in the north, where according to him, their vandalism has caused distress among farmers. Ortega reiterated: "The EPS, the police, and the government are promoting specific plans to put an end to the problem of rearmed groups, but I believe all Nicaraguans must fight these gangs."

Regarding the Army's Organic Law, which will establish the term for the Armed Forces commander in chief, Ortega said that he hopes President Chamorro will pay attention to it and subsequently will send it to the National Assembly to be approved. According to Ortega, the objective of this law is to give harmony to the Army and establish the military career.

FSLN Responds to UNO Positions; Calls for Dialogue

PA0912201993 Managua Canal Cuatro Television in Spanish 0300 GMT 3 Dec 93

["Official reply" by Daniel Ortega, FSLN secretary general, to the UNO Political Council; from the "Extravision" newscast—recorded]

[Text] Fellow Nicaraguans: We held several meetings with the UNO [National Opposition Union] Political Council in November. This Council was represented by what they called a commission designated to discuss constitutional reforms. During these meetings we were able to reach a consensus to make changes in the Constitution and to strengthen our nation's democratic process.

On 30 November, during a meeting with the UNO Political Council, the members of this Council did not agree on the need to ratify these reforms and on the need to immediately find mechanisms to present these to the Legislative Assembly. Yesterday, the UNO Political Council—in a communique set out very clear positions—expressed its ratification [words indistinct] of the reforms already discussed and approved between the UNO representatives and the FSLN [Sandinist National Liberation Front] representatives.

We are therefore herewith responding to the UNO communique in the following terms to overcome, once and for all, this political institutional crisis our nation is experiencing. The letter we are sending to the UNO Political Council says:

During the last meeting between the FSLN's negotiating commission and the UNO Political Council, on Tuesday, 30 November, we presented to you a proposal to initiate, urgently, the national dialogue with the government. The communique you issued on 1 December, point 3, states that the reform package is acceptable.

Now, taking into consideration that the UNO has been repeatedly stating that the constitutional reform issue must be taken up in the national dialogue with the government, the FSLN officially proposes to UNO to immediately proceed to make contacts with government to open the tripartite dialogue. This dialogue would be between the FSLN, UNO, and the government. This dialogue could be initiated as of Monday, 6 December to take up the following points: constitutional reforms, reorganization of the Legislative Assembly, and economic policy.

We present this as our official position to the UNO Political Council and, above all, to the Nicaraguan people and the international community. We are therefore presenting a positive reply to UNO, to UNO political parties so that we can get together with the government as soon as possible to engage in national dialogue and discuss these three issues. We have specifically included the economic issue because we know that this is the issue that affects the Nicaraguan people most adversely.

Panama

OAS Commission Accepts Lawsuits for U.S. Invasion Damages

PA0912194593 Panama City Telemetro Television Network in Spanish 1730 GMT 9 Dec 93

[Report by Valerio Abrego Jimenez from the "Telemetro Reports" newscast—passages within quotation marks recorded]

[Text] The Inter-American Human Rights Commission of the OAS has accepted lawsuits from about 300 Panamanian citizens against the United States for transgressions against the Panamanian community during the 20 December 1989 U.S. invasion, which caused considerable human and property losses, the full amount of which still remains undetermined.

By accepting the lawsuits in an international court, the OAS, through the New York-based Constitutional Center for Human Rights, will implement legal procedures to obtain indemnification on behalf of all people affected. This could amount to $1 billion.

[Jose Luis Murin, representative of the Constitutional Center for Human Rights] "According to the Inter-American Human Rights Commission, the case of the Panamanian homeless against the United States will move forward. We hope the commission will hear individual cases by the end of next year. We also anticipate that the United States will keep trying to shirk its responsibility, as it has been doing for more than three years now."

In the opinion of the representative of the Panama National Human Rights Commission, Conadehupa, international acceptance of the Panamanian lawsuits is a meaningful victory, but now the greatest challenge is to get the United States to answer for the wrongs it inflicted upon Panama.

[Conadehupa Representative Melanio Valdez] "This only means the case has been accepted. It does not mean that there has been a ruling or that any payments are forthcoming. It merely means that the case has been approved for review and analysis."

The Association of Relatives of Invasion Casualties sees a number of contradictions in all of this because, in the group's opinion, there are certain situations that are not being taken into account in this investigation.

[Isabel Corro, president of the Association of Relatives of Invasion Casualties] "They are not taking into account and have not said anything about the common graves. There are still many dead who are listed as missing—both civilians and members of the military. There has been no decision on whether Panama suffered an invasion or war. Nothing has been really defined."

Three More Parties 'May Join' Patriotic Alliance

PA1012031193 Panama City LA PRENSA in Spanish 9 Dec 93 p 1A

[Report by Jose Otero and Ibeth Vega G.]

[Text] The Papa Egoro Movement [MPE], Popular Alliance, and MINA [National Integration Movement] are the other political parties that may join the recently formed "Patriotic Alliance" (AP), according to AP leader Ernesto Cedeno. Cedeno pointed out that talks with the leaders of these three opposition parties are "quite advanced" and it is very likely that they will "swell" AP's ranks.

Last Friday leaders of the Solidarity, Independent Democratic Union (UDI), Civic Renewal Party, and National Unity Mission (MUN) formed the first political alliance for the upcoming elections on 8 May 1994. This coalition was called Patriotic Alliance by its founders. Cedeno said that negotiations with the MPE will resume as soon as Ruben Blades, its presidential candidate, is ready.

Cedeno said the only requirement asked of MPE members for induction into the AP is that they eliminate all preconditions. MPE leadership maintains the position that Ruben Blades must head the ticket of any political alliance he joins. "In this alliance there are no preconditions and its candidates will be chosen in accordance with the negotiations and the common interests of the parties that participate in those negotiations," Cedeno added.

Regarding negotiations with Popular Alliance, he said they were conducted with the faction led by Matilde Mendez and not with the faction headed by Noris Correa Sanjur. "It is almost certain that the group supporting Matilde Mendez will join the alliance within a short time," he said.

Cedeno likewise reiterated that he trusts MINA will be able to join the AP, although at this time that organization is supporting the presidential candidacy of former Comptroller General Ruben Carles. He said talks with that party have resumed and they have shown signs of "wanting to return."

According to Cedeno, the AP leadership has also spoken with leaders from the Popular Nationalist Party (PNP), but they have not shown any interest in joining the alliance. Cedeno also explained that it would be very difficult for the PDC [Christian Democratic Party] to join the AP because the MUN convention delegates are opposed to that. "We believe this new force must have new parties and not traditional parties such as the PDC or PRD [Democratic Revolutionary Party]," Cedeno stressed.

Regarding the formation of the presidential ticket, Cedeno said this has not yet been negotiated and that at this moment AP is trying to recruit as many political parties and organizations as possible to "invigorate" the alliance and make it a "true third force."

Meanwhile, politicians from various groups have expressed skepticism about the possible electoral strength of the AP. Arturo Vallarino, president of the Legislative Assembly and a member of Molirena [Nationalist Liberal Republican Movement], said the creation of new parties was very intense in the beginning "but they have since dispersed and lack political strength. The fact that they (new parties) are establishing certain common bases to unite does not lead me to believe that upon forming an alliance they will have the necessary political strength to win the elections," he said.

According to Solidarity President Samuel Lewis Galindo, the PDC and MPE may join the AP. Nevertheless, brown [dissident] PDC Legislator Domi Luis Montenegro expressed doubts that the PDC will join AP because "the PDC is one of the most traditional parties and may not fit into the alliance."

Argentina

Top Democratic Center Union Leaders Join Justicialist Party

PY0912222593 Buenos Aires BUENOS AIRES HERALD in English 9 Dec 93 p 11

[Text] (DYN-NA)—National Mortgage Bank head (BHN) Adelina Dalesio de Viola and 27 other high-ranking Democratic Centre Union (UCeDe) leaders yesterday officially became Justicialist Party (PJ) members at a ceremony headed by President Carlos Menem.

A moist-eyed Dalesio de Viola said after the ceremony staged at the PJ's Federal Capital headquarters in the Buenos Aires neighbourhood: "I feel I have married Justicialism because I have fallen in love with it."

Justicialist sources said that a total of 5,000 UCeDe card-carrying members have now signed onto its ranks.

The importance given to the occasion—where the liberals-turned-Peronists officially confirmed their decision—by the Justicialist leadership was underlined not only by the presence of the President, who signed the membership cards, but by a delegation of top government officials including Federal Capital Justicialist Party head Raul Matera, Interior Minister Carlos Ruckauf and Tucuman Governor Ramon Ortega.

The former liberal militants, which included Jorge Pirra and Francisco Siracusano, were seen making the traditional V-sign and chanting the Peronist march once the president had stamped his signature on their membership cards.

The decision of virtually all the Federal Capital UCeDe authorities to abandon the liberal ship was blasted by party founder Deputy Alvaro Alsogaray, who yesterday appeared to be glad that he was rid of the officials.

Menem Asks U.S. President for Help in Fight Against Hunger

PY1012010993 Buenos Aires NOTICIAS ARGENTINAS in Spanish 2236 GMT 9 Dec 93

[Text] Buenos Aires, 9 Dec (NA)—President Carlos Menem has asked his U.S. colleague, Bill Clinton, to cooperate with his proposal to create an International Unit of Volunteers to Fight Against Hunger [Cuerpo Internacional de Voluntarios en la Lucha Contra el Hambre] within the framework of the United Nations.

The Argentine chief of state's request is contained in a letter he has addressed to Clinton. The Foreign Ministry today sent the letter to Raul Granillo Ocampo, Argentine ambassador to Washington, who will take it to the White House.

In the letter, Menem reiterates that the initiative "is directed at achieving a joint effort between government, the private sector, and nongovernmental organizations" in order to fight the scourge of hunger.

It was officially reported at that time that Menem's proposal was made known some time ago to UN Secretary General Butrus Butrus-Ghali, who received it with delight.

The information that was released this afternoon on Menem's letter to Clinton adds that the Argentine chief of state will submit this initiative to the pope during a private audience that will be held on 16 December in the Vatican.

Bolivia

President Sanchez Overcomes 'Frictions' With UCS Leader

PY0912124393 La Paz Television Nacional Network in Spanish 0100 GMT 9 Dec 93

[Text] President Gonzalo Sanchez de Lozada has calmed down Max Fernandez, leader of the UCS [Solidarity Civic Union], thus creating peace between them and ruling out the possibility that the UCS would leave the government coalition.

[Begin Fernandez recording] I would like to tell you, with great satisfaction and happiness, that the president and I are now ready to work in a responsible and respectful manner, because the country needs it. [end recording]

This is the result of the meeting between Max Fernandez and the president this afternoon. Max Fernandez, who had an appointment with the president at 1300, had to wait until 1330 for the meeting. Several UCS deputies and leaders waited outside nervously before the arrival of Max Fernandez, who made comments before and after the meeting.

[Begin Fernandez recording] [words indistinct] a definitive meeting. As you know, I have always made very constructive criticisms. The criticisms were not aimed at political gain; they were effective. You have seen that the president himself understood the situation; the criticisms were important, because I knew nothing of the decisions made here in Government House and in Congress. It was therefore logical to be concerned about continuing to support government actions while not participating. [end recording]

With this idea in mind, Max Fernandez had lunch with the president. The meeting lasted several hours, until approximately 1600. After overcoming all the frictions with the president, Max Fernandez announced that a supraparty group would be created.

[Begin Fernandez recording] An organization made up of the other parties of the government coalition will be formed, and it will hold meetings every month. I will also meet with the president every 15 days. It will be a meeting between the MNR [Nationalist Revolutionary Movement], which is the number one force in the

country, and UCS, which is the second force. The meeting will serve for studying and evaluating problems. [end recording]

Max Fernandez made it clear that he is not seeking to become the president of the supraparty group. At any case, relations within the government coalition are now much clearer.

Vice President Addresses Seminar on Indigenous Peoples

PY0912141893 La Paz Television Nacional Network in Spanish 0100 GMT 9 Dec 93

[Text] Vice President Victor Hugo Cardenas said today that the issue of indigenous peoples is no longer an unimportant or forbidden topic. He made this comment during an important seminar on the indigenous peoples of Latin America.

[Begin recording] [Reporter Gabriela Orozco] The Latin American seminar on state reform and the rights of indigenous peoples was held in La Paz. Vice President Cardenas said that the proposals of the indigenous peoples should be a part of government plans.

[Cardenas] The issue of the indigenous peoples is no longer a forbidden topic; it is no longer a demand without importance, or a demand of crying or grumbling. The issue of the indigenous peoples is a Bolivian issue, an issue of the government, of Congress, of research institutes, because this apparently new issue is the oldest of all the issues in the history of our country.

[Orozco] Representatives of indigenous peoples from the continent also attended the seminar. Nina Pakari, a Quechua Indian from Ecuador and legal advisor to the indigenous people in her country, agrees that the issue of the indigenous peoples is no longer unimportant.

[Pakari] In the case of Ecuador, as indigenous people we have drawn in a democratic and broad-minded way an overall agrarian draft law for the participation of indigenous peoples and indigenous peasants.

[Orozco] But the Bolivian Evo Morales, leader of the coca growers, labeled the proposals made by the indigenous peoples as incompatible with the government model.

[Morales] I believe the draft laws of the indigenous peoples should be coherent or consistent with the government programs.

[Orozco] The seminar was also participated in by a Callahuaya [medicine man] to scare away the evil spirits. Vice President Cardenas emphasized the importance of Indian traditions. He even mentioned that he wears a vicuna shawl because according to the Aymara tradition, the main authority always wears one. Cardenas added that when his vice presidential terms ends, he will give back the vicuna shawl along with an inventory of the good and bad things he did during his administration, because this is a demand of the Aymara tradition. [end recording]

Brazil

Franco: 'National Destiny' at Stake in Upcoming Months

PY1012005693 Brasilia Voz do Brasil Network in Portuguese 2100 GMT 9 Dec 93

[Text] President Itamar Franco today participated in a fraternal luncheon with generals from the Aeronautics Club in Brasilia.

In his speech, the president said the state is our fatherland's most important institution and that it must be respected the way we respect sacred things:

[Begin Franco recording in progress] ... a difficult time experienced by all of us requires a clear and pointed expression by the chief of the Executive Branch.

The state may not be viewed with contempt by anyone—and much less by those who are serving a nation that is serving them. [end recording]

The president noted that he has found obstacles in his quest for new ways and that national interests must take precedence over personal projects:

[Begin recording] My administration has been engaged in a daily quest for new ways, but I have been forced to face terrible obstacles. Unfortunately, not everyone—those who were born here and those who came to live and work here—views our country as a society. Personal accomplishment projects, marked by selfishness, often have prevailed over national interests.

We must bear in mind that rights may not be gained through injustice and the violation of immemorial principles by which every man is equally important before life and before God. I do not have to remind you of the misery that offends us. [end recording]

The president championed constitutional revision. He reminded his audience of the necessity of reforming laws when they become old and no longer serve justice:

[Begin recording] Gentlemen, within the next few months we will decide our national destiny. We must pursue, with determination, the task of restoring the state so society will be reorganized on the state's pillars.

I am sending Congress a proposal on constitutional reforms and complementary and regular laws that I deem essential for streamlining the Republic and reorganizing the state.

I am convinced that legislators will not overlook the extreme seriousness of this hour and that the people will not deny their support for the measures the national conscience is demanding. [end recording]

President Itamar Franco thanked the Armed Forces for their support and wished that the New Year will mark the end of the difficulties that have been troubling everyone:

[Begin recording] Messrs. Generals, this message may be summarized by an idea that is quite familiar to you and that comes from the time you were officer candidates and cadets: challenge, a challenge that the Armed Forces of Brazil have been facing with optimism, creativity, discipline, patriotism, and honesty despite the succession of unfavorable circumstances that already have discouraged some of our nation's groups.

Therefore, today I feel particularly happy at being here at this yearly fraternal event. [end recording]

Cardoso To Leave 'Before April' to Run in Elections

PY1012004293 Sao Paulo FOLHA DE SAO PAULO in Portuguese 8 Dec 93 p A3

[Article by Brasilia Bureau Executive Director Josias Souza]

[Excerpt] Finance Minister Fernando Henrique Cardoso is planning to leave the government before April 1994, which is the deadline for registering as a candidate in the upcoming elections. His leaving the government is not preconditioned to the success or failure of the economic program announced on 7 December.

If by any chance his stabilization program fails, the finance minister would leave. If everything goes as planned by the economic team, Cardoso will leave anyway. At this time the minister is betting everything on the success of the economic management strategy he has created with his team. He believes that due to the lack of alternative proposals, Congress initially will resist but will end up approving the measures.

Within the pessimistic scenario of the plan's failure, the finance minister would let President Itamar Franco select his successor. If success is achieved, he will try to convince the president to keep one of his closest advisers as head of the ministry, in other words, economist Edmar Bacha, current special adviser to the ministry.

Cardoso has decided to run in the upcoming elections. At the least he will seek a Senate seat, at the most he will seek the presidency. He has decided not to run for the Sao Paulo State governorship. He believes Senator Mario Covas (PSDB-SP [Brazilian Social Democracy Party-Sao Paulo State]) is the man to run for this post.

Since the FHC [Fernando Henrique Cardoso] plan will be phased in it will not be possible until March 1994 to know whether the measures announced on 7 December will be sufficient to knock out inflation and balance the economy. Therefore, it has been predicted that by that date it will be known whether the minister's economic team is on the right path. [passage omitted]

National Radio Network Interviews Finance Minister Cardoso

PY0912124193 Brasilia Voz do Brasil Network in Portuguese 2100 GMT 8 Dec 93

[Interview with Finance Minister Fernando Henrique Cardoso by reporter Corban Costa at the Finance Ministry in Brasilia—live]

[Text] [Costa] Finance Minister Fernando Henrique Cardoso will go to Congress tomorrow to initiate negotiations with political leaders on the stabilization program. Minister, all of us are aware of the fact that it will be very difficult to negotiate this program in Congress, bearing in mind the tax percentage increases. To what point might the government negotiate this program?

[Cardoso] I don't believe this will be the main problem. The main problem will probably be the Social Emergency Fund [Fundo de Emergencia Social] issue—unless it is explained. I have explained sufficiently that it is a fund to (?help) the municipalities, especially the poorest ones, and to implement social programs such as the health program, the Unified Health System, the rural settlements issue, and the Northeast Misery Fund [Fondo da Miseria do Nordeste] program. There will therefore be no problems if we supply explanations.

Concerning the tax percentages, the problem is the following: Is there any other mechanism to raise $3.7 billion for this fund? If there is any, I harbor no doubts whatsoever. The finance minister feels happy when he can order a reduction in taxes—if he can. He feels happy when there is a concrete proposal, on which an agreement may be reached, allowing the removal of an increase in the tax percentage. I believe that because this increase is negligible, and because it is necessary, Congress will approve it.

[Costa] Minister, the constitutional revision committee has been discussing whether it will approve or promulgate the constitutionally amended bills at the conclusion of its work, as a package, or whether these bills will be promulgated little by little—that is, as soon as a bill is approved it would be promulgated immediately. If a decision is made to promulgate the bills at the end, as a package, how will you resolve this issue, bearing in mind the levying of some taxes?

[Cardoso] If the bills are approved at the end, as a package and as a provisional resolution, it will represent a problem for the required uncoupling of taxes.

Nevertheless, this does not have [words indistinct]. This is a constitutional issue, and Congress will have to make a decision on it. It would actually be ideal for us if they are promulgated immediately. In the meantime, if they are approved immediately and I have a date of promulgation, we could still make a huge effort, but it would be much more difficult. It would be better if they are approved immediately.

[Costa] Minister, this is the first plan, or one of the many plans that we have had so far, in which you are saying that you will not interfere with wages, savings passbooks, and contracts. All the past plans were somehow detrimental to workers' wages. Why won't this plan include these changes? Why won't it be detrimental to the workers' wages?

[Cardoso] First, it probably is not a plan. It is a program, a program that we are combining with society. Second, it would be unfair to adjust the Brazilian economy at the expense of workers' wages, which are already low and so battered.

We therefore made an effort to meet this hope harbored by salaried workers—nothing that will interfere with wages. There is a more practical wage system, in which we will have a strong currency. In other words, workers will be able to enter into contracts using a Real Value Unit [URV].

The workers will thus make a decision when they notice that this represents an advantage for them. This program was nevertheless drawn up with strong social concerns, but without affecting anyone's pocket.

[Costa] Minister, as soon as it is implemented, if the fiscal adjustment is approved in Congress, this URV will have daily adjustments. It is therefore understood that everyone in our economy will keep pace with this URV, and prices also will automatically keep pace. Will these prices increase daily?

[Cardoso] Look, as soon as the URV is approved, the inflation rate will have a downward trend. It will increase at a more reduced rate, and not at a faster rate. And, if URV-adjusted wages increase at the same rate as prices, the workers' purchasing power will be guaranteed. This is why it is something good.

Now the idea is not to implement daily increases. The inflation rate should eventually decline as soon as the URV is introduced. And subsequently, we will be able to say that we have a convertible currency, and halt inflation.

The idea is therefore to do the opposite, even though there will still be some daily price variations, but at a much more reduced pace than the current pace, and with wages keeping pace with prices.

[Costa] We have just heard an interview with Finance Minister Fernando Henrique Cardoso. Minister, thank you very much for this interview.

Sergio Cutolo To Replace Britto as Social Security Minister

PY0912131593 Brasilia Radio Nacional da Amazonia Network in Portuguese 0900 GMT 9 Dec 93

[Report by Luis Augusto Mendonca from Brasilia]

[Text] Social Security Minister Antonio Britto will be replaced by Sergio Cutolo, who is currently the Social Security Ministry's executive secretary.

The future social security minister was born in Sao Paulo State, and is 41 years old. He has occupied several federal administration positions, and is not linked to any political party.

Cutolo graduated in economics, and has a postgraduate degree from Brasilia University as well. When he was introduced to the media by the current social security minister at Planalto Palace last night, Sergio Cutolo said that he would soon release a list of priorities for his sector. He asserted, however, that he will continue to implement Antonio Britto's program to fight fraud as well as failure to pay contributions to the National Institute for Social Security or to any other organization of the overall welfare system.

Sergio Cutolo will be sworn in as social security minister in Rio de Janeiro on 14 December, and receive the title from Britto's hands in Brasilia on 15 December.

Military Ministers Reaffirm Support for Democracy

PY0912232393 Rio de Janeiro Rede Globo Television in Portuguese 2200 GMT 9 Dec 93

[Excerpt] The military ministers have reaffirmed that Brazil's choice is democracy. The statements were made during a ceremony at which President Itamar Franco greeted the new generals.

The delivery of swords was the crowning point for the new Army generals who were promoted by the president. Army Chief of Staff General Benedito Leonel delivered a speech on behalf of Army Minister General Zenildo Zoroastro. In his speech, Gen. Leonel upheld democracy:

[Begin recording] Democracy, in its broadest sense, is our choice. Current events were produced by the circumstances, and they represent a period of purification of the institutions, which are being investigated and purged. [end recording]

Gen. Leonel's words were backed by Gen. Zoroastro:

[Begin recording] We have leaders who are able to properly lead Brazil and overcome the crisis. As Gen. Leonel put it, the crisis is temporary; it is the result of circumstances. [end recording]

In order to be congratulated by President Itamar Franco, Army officers joined the new Navy and Air Force officers at Planalto Palace.

At the traditional end-of-year lunch with the military, Aeronautics Minister Lelio Lobo said that despite the difficulties, there is confidence that problems will be resolved. [passage omitted]

Mines, Energy Minister Launches Energy Conservation Program

PY1012014893 Brasilia Voz do Brasil Network in Portuguese 2100 GMT 9 Dec 93

[Report by Claudia Moreira from Brasilia]

[Text] There was such a huge electric energy waste in 1993 that it was estimated in U.S. dollars: $1.2 billion.

In order to avoid excessive spending, Mines and Energy Minister Paulino Cicero launched an energy conservation program that will initially involve 36 million students from the official education system.

According to Paulino Cicero, a change in habits, through education, will take place at a faster pace than people imagine, thus making Brazilians save between 20 and 25 percent in energy by the year 2015:

[Begin recording] We have taken this stance of taking a turn, a firm turn. And do you know why? Because when an attitude has an economic value, when there is an effective economic gain in a new attitude, it is quickly implemented. And for each dollar we manage to save in well-used energy, we save $4 that would be used to build power plants whose energy would later be wasted.

Therefore, everyone will realize, through the electric energy rates, the advantages of such a new habit that we are now asking the nation to implement. [end recording]

President Itamar Franco already has signed a decree establishing a National Prize for Conservation and Rational Use of Energy that will be awarded to companies and industries.

Itamar Franco also signed a decree establishing a green seal. This means that any merchandise bearing this seal will have a guarantee of consuming less energy.

Chile

Parties Reach Consensus on Shortening President's Term

PY0912131393 Santiago Radio Cooperativa Network in Spanish 1000 GMT 9 Dec 93

[Interview with Deputy Gutenberg Martinez, chairman of the Christian Democratic Party, by reporter Oscar Hernan Guzman in Santiago—live]

[Excerpts] [Guzman] [passage omitted] Has it been very hard for the Christian Democratic Party—since you assumed its reins—to work out an agreement to shorten the president's term of office to six years, as it entailed renouncing its stance on the concurrence of presidential and parliamentary elections?

[Martinez] Well, it made things difficult for us, but we have not definitely renounced our stance—rather we have overlooked it for this one occasion. The truth is that holding presidential elections concurrently with parliamentary elections has been—and continues to be—central for the Christian Democracy. It is a longstanding congressional arrangement, an agreement within our party, stemming from our historical experience. We have already had the experience of difficult situations for the government arising from the fact that presidential and parliamentary elections were not held concurrently, such as minority governments that could not fully implement their programs because they did not have a majority in Congress, power conflicts between the Executive and Legislative Branches, etc. The fact of the matter is that it has been very difficult for us, because we deem it to be a key issue for democracy to be able to operate in our country. And yet, at this juncture, the only thing about which there was broad consensus was to shorten the president's term to six years. Moreover, we thought it was very prejudicial to maintain an eight-year term. We have thus attained one of our objectives—to shorten the president's term of office. The other one, that of holding issue the moment an opportunity presents itself to us in Congress. [passage omitted]

[Guzman] The agreement is to be signed this afternoon. Can you tell us beforehand any details about it?

[Martinez] Well, we are going to have a meeting at midday at the Senate House in Santiago, on Manso de Velazco Street. All party chairmen and Senate and House committee chairmen who belong to the parties that wish to sign this agreement have been invited to attend this meeting. The idea is to sign a sort of document in which we commit ourselves to making every endeavor to pass an amendment to the Constitution—ideally by next week—providing for the shortening of the president's term to six years. [passage omitted]

Sign Agreement

PY0912201893 Santiago Television Nacional de Chile Imagen Internacional in Spanish 1700 GMT 9 Dec 93

[Excerpts] A few minutes ago all political parties with representatives in Congress signed an agreement to reduce the presidential term from eight to six years. Reporter Jose Miguel Alfaro will give us further details on this. Good afternoon, Jose Miguel.

[Begin recording] [Alfaro] Good afternoon, Eduardo. After lengthy negotiations that also included the rejection of a constitutional amendment proposal submitted to Congress by the government, an agreement was finally reached to reduce the presidential term from eight to six years without re-election. [passage omitted]

[Christian Democratic Party Chairman Andres Zaldivar] We have agreed to ask the government to send a constitutional amendment proposal to Congress within the next few days that will set the presidential term at six years without re-election. We have agreed to pool our efforts so this proposal will be approved before the inauguration of the next president of the Republic.

[Alfaro] This means that the proposal must be submitted by 9 January at the latest, so Congress can approve it 60 days later. The president who will be elected on Saturday, 11 December, thus will be sworn in for six years on 11 March. [passage omitted] [end recording]

Colombia

Guerrillas Reportedly Commit New 'Massacre' in Uraba Region

PA1012012293 Santa Fe de Bogota Inravision Television Cadena 1 in Spanish 0000 GMT 10 Dec 93

[From the "24 Hours" newscast]

[Text] Regrettably, we must report a new massacre in the Antioquia Department portion of the Uraba region. Seventeen banana workers were assassinated today.

Authorities report that in the last 30 days over 100 banana farm workers have been assassinated in the agro-industrial area of the Uraba region in Antioquia Department. It was reported that another 17 persons were shot today on two farms located between Apartado and Turbo. Reportedly, an armed group, which State security organizations claim is part of the National Guerrilla Coordinating Board, entered the Cativos Ranch, called 12 persons from a list, and assassinated them in front of their coworkers. Later, their bodies were hung on the hooks used to transport the fruit.

Hours earlier, another criminal group arrived at the San Jorge Ranch and, by the same procedure, killed another five banana plantation workers.

[Begin Apartado Mayor Nelson Campos recording; identified by caption] Enough, messrs. assassins of the inhabitants of the Uraba region. Enough, because the people of Uraba are tired of seeing so much blood. [end recording]

[Begin General Hernan Jose Guzman, the Army commander, recording; identified by caption; in progress] ...the formation of the security advisory committee that will help us extraordinarily with its recommendations and its guidance to be able to work better in the Uraba area. [end recording]

Ecuador

Foreign Minister Says Government Improved Ties With U.S.

PA1012044393 Paris AFP in Spanish 2127 GMT 10 Dec 93

[Text] Quito, 9 Dec (AFP)—Foreign Minister Diego Paredes announced on Wednesday [8 December] that Ecuador has improved its bilateral relations with the United States, which will allow increased U.S. investment and more Ecuadoran exports.

During the last two months, Ecuador signed two agreements with the U.S. Government; one deals with investment guarantees and promotion efforts, and the other concerns copyrights and technological and industrial patent rights.

According to Paredes, "only in this way will we be considered a trustworthy and serious nation, which will lead to foreign capital investments, particularly from the United States."

The head of Ecuadoran diplomacy also said that four months ago "we managed to become beneficiaries of the Andean trade system, which means that almost all of our production will enter the U.S. market, as it already is, free of obstacles, tariffs, and quotas."

He explained that there are only seven products—several of which are of some importance—that are still subject to certain restrictions, which are to be negotiated.

These agreements "constitute a magnificent foundation for a very strong relationship with the United States," Paredes added, stressing that these agreements will grant the country a degree of seriousness and dependability, "which will lead to increased trade, based on the premise that trust is the foundation for any economic or human relationship." The United States is the main buyer of Ecuadoran products.

President Signs Statement With Costa Rican Counterpart

PA1012045193 Mexico City NOTIMEX in Spanish 0308 GMT 10 Dec 93

[Text] Quito, 9 Dec (NOTIMEX)—President Sixto Duran-Ballen of Ecuador and President Rafael Angel Calderon of Costa Rica today signed a joint declaration that included an agreement for bilateral cooperation with regard to commerce, tourism, the environment, and housing.

During the signing ceremony, the last official activity in Calderon's visit to Ecuador, both presidents confirmed their commitment to continue the joint efforts for the defense of the free trade of bananas. They agreed to intensify their efforts so that the EC accedes to revising its protectionist practices which affect the banana exports of Latin American countries.

In a news conference, the two presidents insisted on seeking an "intermediate" formula that would allow a solution to the problem and equally benefit the Latin American producers and the former European colonies. In order to protect its former colonies, the EC imposed, as of 1 July, restrictions on Latin American banana imports and high tariffs for the countries that exceed the established quotas.

The Costa Rican president expressed his belief that GATT will determine in its ruling that the EC has assumed a policy that is contrary to the free trade that Europeans promote. The Uruguay Round of GATT for

the liberalization of world trade must issue a ruling on 15 December regarding a suit filed by the Latin American banana producers against the EC.

Regarding the agreements signed, Duran-Ballen said the tourism agreement will allow Ecuador to exploit the experience of Costa Rica, whose tourism industry "grows and is being consolidated in a permanent manner." He said Ecuador has authorized the Costa Rican airline Lacsa to increase the number of flights [to Ecuador] while the Ecuadoran Aviation Company is rehabilitated.

Calderon arrived on the night of 7 December in this capital for an official visit that will conclude tomorrow, Friday, (0900 local) when he will return to the Costa Rican capital. The president is accompanied by a delegation made up of his wife, Gloria Bejarano, Foreign Relations Minister Bernd Niehaus, and Foreign Trade Minister Roberto Rojas.

Costa Rican Officials Visit Ecuador; Examine Relations

PA0912162293 Paris AFP in Spanish 1714 GMT 8 Dec 93

[Text] Quito, 8 Dec (AFP)—Costa Rican Foreign Minister Bernd Niehaus advocated Wednesday in Quito "a continent without borders," affirming that "the time has come to fulfill the Bolivarian dream of a united continent." After admitting he hoped to be elected the new OAS secretary general, Niehaus told AFP "I hope to have a favorable vote from Ecuador." Ecuadoran President Sixto Duran-Ballen has pledged to vote for Niehaus, a situation that led to a dispute with former President Rodrigo Borja, who was also bidding for that post. Borja withdrew his name from the list of candidates for OAS secretary while attacking the Duran-Ballen government, whose term will end in 1996. Niehaus is accompanying Costa Rican President Rafael Angel Calderon on an official three-day visit to Quito.

Today at noon, Calderon met with Duran-Ballen in the National Palace. In the morning, the Costa Rican president visited Quito's historic center—declared by the United Nations as patrimony of mankind—and had a nice chat with people who greeted and applauded him.

Speaking to reporters, Foreign Minister Niehaus reiterated he was aspiring to the post of secretary general and noted that from there he hoped to attain "Latin American unity." "We have similar conflicts that deserve joint solutions," he indicated. When asked if Cuba should belong to the OAS, he said: "I hope that all countries of the continent will be there."

He did not go into details but noted the OAS must be a broad, reliable, and decisive organism in the face of the area's socioeconomic conflicts. He added that "this will be something for which we will strive." He praised President Duran-Ballen, recalling the latter's visit to Costa Rica, and added that "he won the hearts of all Costa Ricans with his kindness."

Niehaus indicated his country and Ecuador have much in common, including bananas. "We are brother countries separated only by two hours of flight time," he indicated. Upon arriving in Quito on Monday, President Calderon voiced the need for the two countries to strive for better banana prices on the European market. Since last June, the EC has had restrictions on Latin American bananas and coffee. "We are together in a Latin America different from what this area used to be 15 years ago. We are experiencing an epidemic of democracy," Calderon affirmed. Ecuadoran and Costa Rican banana exports totaled $1.120 billion last year.

Paraguay

Senate Rejects Executive Branch Veto on Military Law

PY0912235493 Asuncion ULTIMA HORA in Spanish 9 Dec 93 p 3

[Text] The National Congress, with the majority decision of the Senate, has rejected the Executive Branch veto on the repealing of Law No. 216 on the reorganization of the Armed Forces. During a special session this morning, the Senate confirmed its original decision, restoring and modifying the previous Military Law No. 74/91. There were 38 senators at the session, of whom 28 voted in favor and nine against. Seven senators were absent.

The opposition bloc, made up of members of the PLRA [Authentic Radical Liberal Party], the National Encounter, and the Colorado Reconciliation Movement, complied with the pact to repeal the Military Organization Law, which was sanctioned by the previous Congress and which created the post of commander of the Armed Forces. With the reenactment of Law 74/91, this post, which is currently held by Vice Admiral Eduardo Gonzalez Petit, will automatically disappear.

The disappearance of this post was the most hotly debated topic. While opposition members claimed it was unconstitutional, government senators disagreed, even hinting that the Senate decision might prompt the presentation of a request that the resolution be declared unconstitutional. Government bloc leader Juan Carlos Galaverna charged the opposition with trying to create anarchy, while PLRA leader Miguel Abdon Saguier said Congress is empowered to repeal and modify a law, adding that no constitutional principle has been violated.

Senator Sebastian Gonzalez Insfran said the post of commander of the Armed Forces was created in keeping with the Constitution, and that the Constitution has been violated by repealing a law that created the post.

National Encounter Senator Diego Abente, on behalf of the majority of members of the Constitutional Affairs

Commission, read a resolution asking the plenary session to reject the executive branch veto. The minority resolution against repealing the law was signed by Senators Miguel Angel Gonzalez Casabianca and Sebastian Gonzalez Insfran.

Tokyo To Extend 3.23-Billion-Yen Loan to Paraguay

OW0612234393 Tokyo KYODO in English 2310 GMT 6 Dec 93

[Text] Tokyo, 7 Dec, KYODO—Japan will lend Paraguay up to 3.23 billion yen to cooperate in its program to repair and modernize a satellite communications system, the Foreign Ministry said Tuesday [7 December].

Japanese Ambassador to Paraguay Sumio Ono and Paraguay's Foreign Minister Diogenes Martinez exchanged documents on the loan in Paraguay's capital of Asuncion, the ministry said.

The 30-year loan, with a 10-year grace period, carries an annual interest rate of 3 percent.

The latest loan brings the total amount of Japanese loans to the latin American nation to 62.91 billion yen, the ministry said.

The loan will be extended for Paraguay's program dubbed "via satellite earth station improvement project," which aims to repair and build antennas for the earth station, set up digital satellite communications equipment and increase international telephone exchange facilities, it said.

The earth station was built with Japanese loans extended to Paraguay in 1972 and 1975 amounting to a total of 5.9 billion yen, it said.

Uruguay

Foreign Minister 'Not Optimistic' on GATT Round Package

PY1012020293 Montevideo Radio El Espectador Network in Spanish 0000 GMT 10 Dec 93

[Text] [Uruguayan Foreign Minister] Sergio Abreu, the Uruguay Round of GATT talks president, today emphasized in Brussels that the final GATT agreement must respect the global principle of reciprocity, globalism, and balance.

Foreign Minister Abreu said he thinks a global package on the Uruguay Round of GATT talks will be signed on 15 December.

After meeting with the EEC agriculture representative, Abreu said: I am not optimistic about this package, but it is necessary to combine responsibility with dissatisfaction [as heard].

The Uruguayan foreign minister explained that compensations are part of a negotiation in keeping with the reality of countries.

Venezuela

Electoral Council President Dismisses Election Fraud

PA1012033093 Caracas Venezolana de Television Network in Spanish 0230 GMT 10 Nov 93

[From "The Observer" newscast]

[Text] Isidro Morales Paul, Supreme Electoral Council president, has said that it was impossible to commit fraud during the 5 December elections. Morales said that he was very pleased with the elections when he officially notified President Ramon Jose Velasquez of Rafael Caldera's victory. All of the electoral certificates are well-protected at CSE offices, he said.

[Begin Morales Paul recording] I am not denying the possibility of certain irregularities. I must say, however, that all of the political organizations have copies of the electoral certificates, and, therefore, all of the political organizations know what the results are. It would be impossible—and even silly, I would say—for a political organization to try to alter those results. [end recording]

Morales said that if it can be proven that irregularities were committed at the main electoral boards in the various states, the CSE would intervene on those boards.

Finally, Morales announced that President-elect Rafael Caldera's inauguration ceremony will take place on 14 December at 1800 at CSE headquarters.